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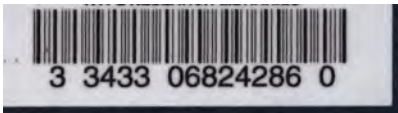
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James Lenox.

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James Lenox.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION:

BY BLAISE PASCAL.

PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON RELIGION:

BY THE REV. THOMAS ADAM.

EDITED BY THE REV. E. BICKERSTETH,

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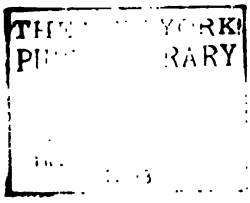

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE reader has, in this volume, the PRIVATE THOUGHTS of PASCAL and ADAMS; those of PASCAL calling our attention to the incalculable importance of the Christian faith, and those of ADAM disclosing the inward experience of an acute and faithful Christian, and furnishing a deep insight into the corruption of the human heart, though under the counteracting influence of divine grace.

In a future volume the Editor purposes to give such farther Private Thoughts of eminent Christians as may appear desirable to complete this part of the Christian's Family Library.

In a judicious and valuable Life of Pascal, inserted in various numbers of the Christian Observer for 1815, are the following just remarks on his PRIVATE THOUGHTS.

"The posthumous publication intitled 'Thoughts on Religion," consists of reflections which arose occasionally in his mind, and were suggested under a great variety of circumstances; which he committed to paper, without order or coherence, and

which are the mere fragments of materials designed to enter into the composition of his great work. Yet these rude and immature productions, these ideas and sentiments, partially evolved and imperfectly developed, display an intellect of surpassing energy and expansion: there is a richness, depth, and pregnancy in them, which gives us an assurance, that had the author lived to unfold and arrange, to combine and perfect, these shapeless rudiments, according to the model traced in his own mind, we should have possessed a most convincing and original exhibition of the evidences and spirit of Christianity.

Among the various and almost inimitable excellences, which may be discovered in the Thoughts of Pascal, his forcible and pathetic appeals to the hearts and consciences of his readers, constitute a distinguishing and prominent feature. He did not consider it sufficient to enunciate revealed religion as simply true, but he announced it as a system of truth of the highest importance, and most absolute necessity; as alone capable of dissolving the clouds of perplexity and error which oppress and mislead the mind, and dispelling that painful and agitating uncertainty concerning the origin, condition, duty, and final destiny of man, which is equally inimical to his virtue, his repose, and his happiness. Pascal represented Christianity as the only balm and cordial that could soothe and alleviate the multiplied miseries of human life; that could infuse courage and impart consolation under every form of suffering; and in those last hours of feebleness, languishing, and anxiety, when no exterior aids can minister support to dissolving nature, as that which can shed a lustre and brightness through the gloomy avenues of death, and communicate to the heart of the dying believer, light, and animation, and joy; "a joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The Rev. Thomas Adam was born in 1701. He was

Rector of Wintringham for 58 years, and died in 1784. His Private Thoughts are of a very evangelical and experimental character. The following extract from the Preface (written, the Editor believes, by the late Mr. Richardson of York) will assist the reader in forming a right judgment of them.

"In an unconverted person there is but one nature: in a real Christian there are two; the one is called the flesh, the other the spirit. These terms do not relate to the conflict between reason and passion, of which the pagan philosophers wrote; but to the conflict between all that is of man by nature, whether reason, passion, or whatever else, and all that is of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, communicated through the Holy Ghost. Each nature has its distinct exercises in the same man; the result must be two sets, as it were, of affections, views, and propensities. This consideration alone accounts for the seeming paradox, that St. Paul should speak such apparent contradictions. If the reader be apt to wonder that Mr. Adam should sometimes speak so triumphantly of the happiness and holiness of a Christian, at other times so feelingly of his corruption and misery, he must be understood to speak with reference to these two states; and it will be a sufficient apology to say, in his behalf, that the same seeming inconsistency is in St. Paul himself. He who, in Romans, vii. is "carnal, sold under sin," is in the viiith made "free from the law of sin and death." Each assertion has its truth, as reference is made to each of the states in which he is conversant. In one sense he is wicked, miserable, unclean, a slave of all that is evil; in another he is holy, happy, pure in heart, the Lord's freeman, and an heir of heaven. It is not to be wondered at that the conflict of such opposite views and principles should produce various exercises in the human heart; and that a mind, vigorous and intelligent, like our author's, would be led to take large notice of them in viewing his own. This it is

which constitutes the Christian's internal warfare, and which will continue, till death transmit the patient warrior to that rest which remains for the people of God.

Perhaps the difficulty which many find in admitting that St. Paul was speaking of himself in Rom. vii. will be farther obviated by considering that it is not a practical course of wickedness which he means, when he talks of being "carnal, sold under sin:" concupiscence is the term he uses, and that is what he means by indwelling sin. It is the tendency of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, that he complains of, as perpetually exerting itself in inward opposition to the will of God, and continually marking with imperfection the best of his purposes and actions. Did not the Christian himself inform us of it, it would often be scarce discernible, seldom or ever in a great degree, by others, that he had this sinful propensity. His walk is not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, as St. Paul declares. And the general prevalency of holiness in the conduct, is the standing evidence of his sincere conversion.

Something it may be necessary to add respecting the form in which these Private Thoughts of Mr. Adam are presented to the public. They are extracted from a kind of diary, wherein, during more than thirty years, he occasionally wrote his sentiments, on a variety of subjects, as they arose in his mind, without observing any particular order or method, and very seldom prefixing a date. In this state it came into the hands of the editors, to whom the author had committed the care of his papers, with a discretionary power to publish or suppress what they pleased. Struck with the remarkable honesty and wisdom that appeared in the observations it contained, they thought that such a selection might be made for the press, as would greatly tend to illustrate the subject of human nature, and a work of grace *upon the* heart. In order to make these select ob-

servations more useful, it was thought necessary to reduce them into some order, and class them under certain heads. This has been attempted in the way which the editors of Mons. Pascal's 'Thoughts on Religion' tell us, in their preface, they pursued. A distinct chapter is allotted to each subject, and a regular method is aimed at in the order and connection of the subjects. This attempt was not without its difficulties. Many of the author's observations being of a complex kind, it was not easy to fix upon the leading sentiment, so as to assign them their proper place. Some inaccuracy will, perhaps, be discovered, and some indulgence is requested of the public in this respect. Under the head of *Confessions*, which is the title of the first chapter, will be found most of those devout aspirations and reflections, whether of a penitential or thankful kind, which lie scattered about in the author's diary; and under the term 'Christian Life,' which is the title of another chapter, the editors meant to give all his observations that relate to those exercises, conflicts, and circumstances, that peculiarly constitute and attend the 'Life of God in the Soul of Man.'

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THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

BY BLAISE PASCAL.

PREFACE.

BLAISE PASCAL was born in 1623, and died in 1661, aged 36. He early discovered marks of extraordinary capacity; and after pursuing philosophical and mathematical studies till 1647, was then providentially and graciously led to apply himself to the great truths of the gospel, and to live for God alone.

Pascal was a Roman Catholic, and a Jansenist. He published a peculiarly able and valuable work against the Jesuists, under the title of 'Letters of a Provincial to one of his Friends.'

He designed to compose a defence of the Christian Religion against the objections of infidels: but his declining health rendered him unable to execute it. 'His Private Thoughts contain the greater part of what he had written with a view to that performance: and though it consists only of detached thoughts which he had left on loose papers, it has justly obtained a high esteem in the religious world, and is the production by which Pascal is now most generally known.'

His Provincial Letters were a defence of Christianity against its pretended friends. The work he intended to have composed, if his life had been spared, would have been a defence of it against its open, but perhaps less dangerous enemies.

Of this work he once gave an outline in conversation with his friends, who requested he would tell them his plan. He detailed it without any preparation in an extempore discourse, which lasted between two and three hours, charming them with the con-

ligent in the search of truth, to complain so frequently, that nothing reveals and displays it to them? For this very obscurity under which they labour, and which they object against the church, does itself evince one of the two grand points which the church maintains, without affecting the other, and is so far from overthrowing its doctrines, that it manifestly confirms and supports them.

In order to give any weight to their objections, they ought to urge, that they have exerted their utmost endeavours, and have used all the means of information which the church recommends, without obtaining satisfaction. If they could say this, they would indeed attack religion in one of its pretensions: but I hope to shew, in the following papers, that no reasonable person can speak after this manner; and I dare assert, that none ever did. We know very well how men act under this indifference of temper; they suppose themselves to have made mighty efforts towards the instruction of their minds, when they have spent some hours in reading the Scriptures, and have asked some questions of a clergyman concerning the Articles of Faith. When this is done, they declare to all the world, that they have consulted men and books without success. But I cannot refrain from telling such men, (what I have often told them,) that their negligence is insufferable. It is not a foreign or a petty interest, which is in dispute; ourselves, and our all are at stake.

The immortality of the soul is a thing which so deeply, so infinitely concerns us, that we must have utterly lost all feeling, to be cold and indifferent about it. All our actions and thoughts must take so very different a course, according as eternal blessings may, or may not be expected, that it is impossible for us to proceed with judgment and discretion, except we keep this point, which ought ever to be our ultimate object, continually in view.

Thus our highest interest, and our principal duty,

is to get light into a subject on which our whole conduct depends. And, therefore, in the number of wavering and unsatisfied men, I make the greatest difference imaginable between those who do their utmost to obtain instruction, and those who live without ever thinking or troubling themselves about it.

I cannot but feel compassion for those who sincerely grieve at being in this doubtful state of mind; who look upon it as the greatest of misfortunes, and who spare no pains to be delivered from it, by making these researches their chief and most serious employ. But as for those who pass away their life without reflecting on its final issue, and who, merely because they do not find in themselves sufficient evidence to convince them, neglect to seek it elsewhere, and to examine to the bottom, whether the opinions proposed be such as men are wont to entertain through credulous simplicity, or such as, though obscure in themselves, are yet built on solid and immoveable foundations, I consider them in a very different light. This carelessness about an affair in which themselves, their eternity, their all, is concerned, rather provokes my resentment than engages my pity. Nay, it strikes me with wonder and astonishment; it is a monster to my apprehension. I speak not this from the pious zeal of rapturous devotion; on the contrary, I affirm, that the love of ourselves, the interest of mankind, and the most simple glimmerings of reason, do naturally inspire us with these sentiments; and that to know this, we need only see what persons of the meanest capacities understand.

It requires no great superiority of mind to discover that nothing in this world is productive of true and solid satisfaction; that all our pleasures are merely vanity, that our troubles are innumerable; and that, after all, death, which threatens us every moment, must, in a few years, perhaps in a few days, put us into an eternal state of happiness, or misery, or annihilation. Between us and heaven, or

hell, or annihilation, there is nothing interposed but life, the most brittle thing in all the world; now as the happiness of heaven is certainly not designed for those who doubt whether their souls be immortal, such persons have nothing to expect but the miserable chance of annihilation, or hell.

Nothing can be more true, and nothing more terrible than this. Let us brave it as we will, in this must end the most splendid life that is spent upon earth.

It is in vain for men to turn aside their thoughts from this eternity which awaits them, as if they were able to destroy it by neglecting to think of it: it subsists in spite of them, it is hastening on, and death, which is to draw the curtain from it, will, in a short time, infallibly reduce them to the dreadful necessity of being for ever annihilated, or for ever miserable.

We have here a doubt of the most awful consequence, and to be the subject of it is indisputably a most serious misfortune; but, at the same time, it is an indispensable duty not to remain under it, without inquiring diligently to be delivered from it.

He, then, who doubts, and yet seeks not to be resolved, is equally unhappy and unjust; but if withal he is easy and contented, if he freely avows his indifference, and above all, if he takes a pride in professing it, and makes this most deplorable condition the subject of his vanity and pleasure, I have not words to fix a name on so extravagant a creature.

Whence can a man derive such sentiments? What pleasure can there be in expecting nothing but misery without resource? What cause is there for vanity in finding one's self in impenetrable darkness? Or what consolation in despairing for ever of a comforter?

To be at ease in such ignorance, is a thing so *monstrous*, that they who live in it ought to be

aroused to a sense of its stupidity and extravagance, by having their inward reflections laid open before them, that they may be confounded at the prospect of their own folly. For thus it is that men reason, who thus obstinately remain ignorant of what they are, without seeking for information.

'I know not who has sent me into the world; nor what the world is, nor what I am myself. I am shockingly ignorant of all things. I know not what my body is, what my senses are, or what my soul is. This very part of me which thinks what I speak, which reflects upon itself, and upon every thing around me, is yet as ignorant of itself as it is of every thing else. I behold these frightful spaces of the universe with which I am encompassed, and feel myself confined to one little corner of the vast extent, without understanding why I am placed in this part of it rather than in any other; or why the short period of time that is allotted me to live, was assigned to me at this particular point, rather than any other, of the whole eternity which was before me, or of that which is to come after me. I see nothing but infinities on all sides, which swallow me up like an atom, or like a shadow, which endures but a single instant, and is never to return. All that I know is, that I must shortly die; but what I am most ignorant of is this very death, from which I cannot escape.

'As I know not whence I came, so I know not whither I am going; only this I know, that at my departure out of the world, I must either be for ever annihilated, or fall into the hands of an incensed God, without being able to decide which of these two conditions will be my everlasting portion.

'Such is my state, so full of weakness, obscurity, and wretchedness. And from all this I conclude, that I ought to pass all the days of my life, without ever considering what is hereafter to befal me; and that I have nothing to do but to follow my inclina-

tions, without reflection or disquiet, doing all that which, if what is said of a miserable eternity be true, will infallibly plunge me into it. It is possible I might find some light to clear up my doubts; but I will not take the trouble to stir one foot in search of it; and despising all those who do take pains in this inquiry, I am resolved to go on, without fear or foresight, and try the grand event; I will pass as easily as I can out of life, and die utterly uncertain about the eternal state of my future existence."

It is an honour to religion that it has such unreasonable men for its professed enemies; and their opposition is of so little importance to it, that, on the contrary, it serves to confirm the principal truths which it teaches. For the grand object of Christianity is to establish these two principles, the depravity of human nature, and redemption by Jesus Christ. Now these opposers, if they are of no use in demonstrating the truth of redemption, by the sanctity of their lives, are yet highly serviceable in shewing the corruption of nature by their unnatural sentiments.

Nothing is so important to any man as his own state; nothing so serious to him as eternity. If, therefore, we find persons indifferent to the loss of their being, and to the danger of everlasting misery, their temper is highly unnatural. They are quite different men in all other things; they fear the smallest inconveniences; they see them as they approach, and feel them when they arrive; and the same man who passes days and nights in rage and despair for the loss of a place, or for some imaginary affront to his honour, is the very same mortal who knows that he must soon lose every thing by death, and yet remains without disquiet, concern, or emotion. This strange insensibility with respect to things the most awful in their consequences, in a *heart so* acutely sensible to the meanest trifles, is a

prodigy, an unintelligible enchantment, a supernatural infatuation.

A man confined in a dungeon, who does not know but the order for his execution is given, who has but a single hour to inform himself concerning it, and that one hour sufficient, in case it have passed, to obtain its revocation, would act contrary to nature, should he make use of this hour not to procure the necessary information, but to play and divert himself; yet such is the condition of the persons we are describing, only with this difference, that the evils with which they are threatened, are infinitely greater than the mere loss of life, and the transient punishment which the prisoner would have to fear. Yet they run thoughtlessly upon the precipice, casting a veil over their eyes, to keep themselves from discerning it, and making mock of those who warn them of their danger.

Thus not only the zeal of those who do seek God, demonstrates the truth of religion, but likewise the blindness of those who do not seek him, and who pass their days in this horrible neglect. There must have been a strange revolution in the nature of man, to be able to live in such a state,—much more to applaud and value himself upon it. For supposing it to be absolutely certain, that there is nothing but annihilation to fear after death, would not this rather be a cause for dejection than for pride? And is it not the highest pitch of extravagance, if we have no certainty of this, to glory because we are in doubt?

And yet, after all, it is too evident that man has so far declined from his original nature, that there is in his heart a secret delight in all this. Nay this brutal ease between the fear either of hell or of annihilation, carries somewhat so tempting in it, that not only do those who unhappily are sceptically inclined make a boast of it, but even those who are not, think it something brave to pretend to be so,

For experience shews us, that most of those who pretend to infidelity are of this latter kind, mere counterfeits and hypocrites in atheism. They are persons who have heard it said, that the genteel manners of the world consist in thus acting the bravo. This is what they term throwing off the yoke, and which the greater number of them profess to do, merely in imitation of others.

But if they have the least portion of common sense, it will not be difficult to make them perceive how miserably they deceive themselves, by seeking in this way for applause and esteem. For this is not the method to gain credit, even with worldly men who are able to judge rightly on things, and who know that the only method of succeeding is to appear honest, faithful, prudent, and capable of advancing the interest of our friends; for men naturally love nothing but that which some way contributes to their benefit. But what benefit can we derive from hearing a man confess that he has shaken off the yoke of religion; that he does not believe there is a God who watches over his actions; that he considers himself as absolute master of his own conduct, and accountable for it only to himself? Does he think we shall be induced from hence to repose a greater degree of confidence in him, and to look to him for comfort, advice, or assistance, in the difficulties of life? Can he imagine we are greatly delighted when he tells us, that he doubts whether our souls be any thing better than a little wind or smoke; especially if he tells it us with an air of assurance and satisfaction? Is such a thing to be spoken of with pleasantry? or should it not rather be uttered with sadness, as the most melancholy reflection that can be mentioned.

If they would but think seriously on the subject, they must perceive this conduct to be so very ill chosen, so contrary to good manners, and so remote *even from* that gentility to which they pretend, that

nothing can more effectually expose them to the contempt and aversion of mankind, to mark them out as persons defective in understanding and judgment. And, indeed, should we require of them an account of their sentiments, and of the reasons for which they call Religion in question, what they have to offer would appear so weak and contemptible, that it would rather confirm us in our belief. This is what a person once told them with great propriety, *If you continue* (said he) *to talk at this rate, you will infallibly make me a Christian.* And he was in the right: for who would not tremble to find himself entangled in the same opinions with associates so truly contemptible.

Those therefore who only counterfeit these principles, are extremely unhappy in putting a constraint on their natural disposition, in order to render themselves the most impertinent of all mankind. If they are heartily and sincerely concerned at their want of information, let them not dissemble it. A confession of this can never be shameful; for there is really no shame, but in being shameless. Nothing betrays so much weakness of understanding, as not to perceive the misery of man *without God.* Nothing is a surer token of extreme baseness of spirit, than not to wish for the reality of eternal promises. No man is so truly a coward, as he that acts the brave against heaven. Let them therefore leave these impieties to those who are born with a judgment so unhappy, as to be capable of entertaining them in earnest. If they cannot be *Christian Men,* let them be *Men of Honour:* and let them at last acknowledge, that there are but two sorts of persons who deserve to be accounted reasonable, either those who serve God with all their heart, because they know him; or those who seek him with all their heart, because as yet they know him not.

To those persons then who sincerely inquire after God, and who, being sensible of their misery, truly

desire to be rescued from it, it is just to contribute our labour and service, to assist them in finding out that light of which they feel the want.

But as for those who live without either knowing God, or endeavouring to know him, they look on themselves as so little deserving their own care, that they cannot but be unworthy the care of others: and it requires all the charity of the religion they despise, not to despise *them* to such a degree, as to abandon them to their folly. But since the same religion obliges us to consider them, while they remain in this life, as still capable of God's enlightening grace; and to believe it possible, that, in a very short time, they may be filled with a greater degree of faith than ourselves; and that we on the other hand, may fall into their blindness; we ought to do for them, what we desire should be done to us in their case; to intreat them that they would take pity on themselves, and at least advance a step or two, and try if they can discover the light. To this end let them employ in the perusal of this work, a few of those hours which they spend so unprofitably in other pursuits. It is possible they may gain somewhat by the reading; at least, they cannot be great losers. But if any shall apply themselves to it, with perfect sincerity, and with an unfeigned desire of knowing the truth, I hope they will meet with satisfaction, and be convinced by those proofs of our divine religion, which they will here find collected together.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHARACTERS OF TRUE RELIGION.

RUE religion will always distinguish itself by bliging men to love God. This is what natural istice requires, and yet what no religion but the hristian has ever enjoined.

It ought likewise to know the concupiscence of an, and his utter insufficiency for the attainment f virtue by his own strength. It should likewise oint out the proper remedies for this defect; of hich prayer is the chief. Our religion has done all is, and no other has ever taught us to beg of God ie power to love and obey him.

To establish the truth of a religion, it is necessary iat it should be acquainted with human nature. or our true nature and true happiness, true virtue nd true religion, are things the knowledge of which inseparable. It should also be able to discern the reatness and the meanness of man; together with ie reason of both. What religion, the Christian nly excepted, has ever made all these known?

Other religions, as those of the heathens, are more opular, for they consist only in external appearnce; but then they are not adapted to men of talents nd understanding. A religion purely intellectual, ight be fitter for men of genius, but would by no ieans be suited to the common ranks of mankind. hristianity alone is proportioned to all; for it

consists both of that which is internal and of that which is external. It raises the most ignorant to inward and spiritual acts, and brings down the most intelligent to outward performances, and is never complete but when it joins one of these effects to the other. For it is both necessary that the common people should understand the *spirit* of the *letter*, and that the learned should submit their spirit to the *letter*, by the performance of outward actions.

That we are in ourselves hateful, reason alone will convince us; and yet there is no religion but the Christian which teaches us to hate ourselves; wherefore no other religion can be entertained by those who know themselves to be worthy of nothing but hatred.

No religion, except the Christian, has understood that man is the most excellent of visible creatures, and, at the same time, the most miserable. Some, perceiving the reality of his excellence, have censured as mean and ungrateful, the low opinion which men naturally entertain of themselves. Others, well knowing the unhappy effects of his baseness and misery, have treated with the greatest ridicule those sentiments of grandeur which are no less natural to men.

Our religion alone has taught that man is born in sin: no sect of philosophers ever said this; therefore none of them ever declared the truth.

God being concealed from us, every religion which does not teach that he is so, is false; and every religion which does not shew the reason why he is so, must be barren and unedifying: our religion has done both.

That religion which consists in believing that man has fallen from a state of glory and communication with God, to a state of sorrow, humiliation, and estrangement from God, but that he should be at length restored by a Messiah who was to come, has always been in the world. All things have passed

away but this, for which all other things exist, has remained. For God, having designed to form to himself a holy people, whom he would separate from all other nations, deliver from their enemies, and settle in a place of rest, was pleased expressly to promise, not only that he would do this, but that he would come himself into the world for that purpose, and foretold by his prophets the very time and manner of his coming. In the mean while, to confirm the hope of his elect through all ages, he gave them continual types and figures, and never left them without assurances both of his power and his inclination to save them. For immediately after the creation of man, Adam was the witness of these, being made depositary of the promise concerning a Saviour to be born of the seed of the woman; and though men, so near the time of their first creation, could not have forgotten their creation and their fall, or the promise which God had given them of a Redeemer; yet since they suffered themselves to be carried away into all sorts of corruptions and disorders, God was pleased to raise up holy men, as Enoch, Lamech, and others, who patiently waited for that Messiah who was promised from the commencement of the world. After this, when the wickedness of men was arrived at its highest pitch, God sent Noah, whom he saved, when all the rest of the world was drowned, by a miracle which testified at once the power of God to save the world, and his determination to do so, by raising up to the woman the seed which he had promised. This miraculous interposition was sufficient to establish the hopes of mankind; and the memory of it was still fresh in their minds, when God renewed his promises to Abraham, who dwelt in the midst of idolaters, and revealed to him the mystery of the Messiah that was to come. In the days of Isaac and Jacob, iniquity had spread itself over the whole earth; yet these holy patriarchs lived in faith, and the latter of them,

as he blest his children when he was dying, cried out with a degree of transport which interrupted his discourse, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

The Egyptians were polluted with idolatry and magic, and the people of God were led away by their example; yet Moses, with other excellent persons, saw him who was invisible, and adored him, looking forward to those eternal blessings which he was preparing for them.

The Greeks and Romans afterwards spread the worship of fictitious deities: the poets invented different systems of theology; philosophers were divided into a thousand different sects; yet there were always in Judea, men chosen to prophesy of the coming of the Messiah, who was unknown to every other nation.

At length, in the fulness of time, he came; and ever since his appearance, notwithstanding all the schisms and heresies which have arisen, all the kingdoms which have been destroyed, and the numerous changes which have taken place in all things, this same church, that worships *him* who has ever been adored, still subsists without interruption. And what is astonishing, unparalleled, and altogether divine, this religion which has always endured, has been always opposed. A thousand times has it been apparently on the very brink of total destruction; and as often as it has been so, so often has it been rescued by some extraordinary interposition of Almighty Power. And it is still further astonishing, that it should always have been able to stand, without in any degree yielding to the will of its oppressors.

States must infallibly perish, if they did not often permit their laws to give way to necessity: but religion has never done this, and yet has stood its ground. But either such accommodations or miracles are indispensable. It is no wonder that governments

hould preserve themselves by yielding to circum-
tances; and yet it is in some degree improper to
all this preserving themselves; and hence we see
hat they have all at length been utterly destroyed,
or has any one of them lasted so long as fifteen
undred years. But that this religion should have
lways continued unchanged and inflexible, this is
:uly divine.

Truth would be too much obscured, if it were des-
tute of visible appearances, of which this is a very
'onderful one, that it should have been always
erpetuated in a church or visible assembly. Its
istre, on the other hand, would be too great, if this
hurch were altogether undivided in opinion: but in
rder to find out which opinion is true, we have only
) examine what has *always* been held by it; for it is
ertain that what is true has never ceased to have a
lace in it, while nothing that is false has been always
iaintained.

Thus has faith in the Messiah been perpetually
iaintained. The tradition concerning him was
anded down regularly from Adam to Noah and
loses. After these, the prophets predicted his
oming, at the same time foretelling other things,
'hich were from time to time fulfilled in the eyes
f the world, and which demonstrated the truth of
ieir mission, and consequently of their promises
oncerning him. They unanimously declared, that
ie law given to them was but preparatory to that of
ie Messiah; that till he came it should subsist, but
iat the latter should endure for ever; and that by
iis means, either the law of Moses, or that of the
lessiah, of which it was a promise, should always
ontinue upon earth; and, in fact, it has always con-
nued. Jesus Christ came under all the circumstances
ey had predicted. He wrought miracles, as did
lso his apostles, who converted the gentile world:
nd the prophecies being thereby fulfilled, the Mes-
iah is for ever demonstrated.

I see many contrary religions, all of which must be false but one. Each of them claims credit upon its own authority, and deals out its threatenings against all who disbelieve it. I do not therefore take them at their word. For they can all do alike in this respect, just as every man can call himself a prophet. But in Christianity I see the accomplishment of prophecies, and an infinite number of miracles, attested beyond all reasonable doubt, and these I find in no other religion.

The only religion which is contrary to our nature in its present state, which opposes our pleasures, and which at first sight appears contrary to common sense, is that which has subsisted from the beginning.

The whole arrangement of things ought to turn on the establishment and grandeur of religion. Men should feel within them sentiments agreeable to what it teaches; and, in a word, it ought to be so much the object and centre to which all things tend, that whosoever understands the principles of it, may be enabled to give an account, both of human nature in particular, and of the whole state and order of the world in general.

It is upon this very foundation that profane men take occasion to blaspheme the Christian religion, because they misunderstand it. They imagine that it consists purely in the adoration of the Divinity, as a great, powerful, and eternal Being. This is properly Deism, and stands almost as far removed from Christianity as Atheism, which is directly opposite to it. Yet hence they infer the falsehood of this religion; because, say they, if it were true, God would have manifested himself to mankind by such indisputable proofs, that it would have been impossible for any man to mistake them.

But let them conclude what they will against Deism, they will be able to draw no such conclusion against Christianity, which acknowledges, that since

the fall God does not manifest himself to mankind with all the evidence that he could do. Christianity peculiarly consists in the mystery of a Redeemer, who, by uniting in himself the divine and human natures, has delivered men from the corruption of sin, to reconcile them to God in his divine person.

It therefore instructs men in these two important truths, that there is a God whom they are capable of knowing and enjoying; and that there is that corruption in their nature, which renders them unworthy of this blessing. It is of equal importance to know both the one and the other of these points. It is equally dangerous for man to know God without the knowledge of his own misery, and to know his own misery without the knowledge of a Redeemer, who can deliver him from it. For one without the other, begets either the pride of philosophers, who knew God, but not their own misery; or the despair of atheists, who know their own misery, but know nothing of a Redeemer.

And thus as it is equally necessary to man to possess a knowledge of each of these principles, so is it to be ascribed alone to the mercy of God, that he has been pleased to teach them to us. And this is the office of Christianity, and that in which its peculiar essence consists.

Let men examine the economy of the world on this principle, and they will see whether all things do not tend to establish these two fundamental truths of our religion.

If any one knows not himself to be full of pride, ambition, concupiscence, weakness, misery, and unrighteousness, he is blind. And if, knowing this, he has no desire for deliverance, what can be thought of so irrational a man? How then can we do otherwise than esteem a religion which so well understands the defects of mankind? Or do otherwise than wish that religion may be true, which provides such suitable remedies against them?

It is impossible to take a view of all the proofs of Christianity together, without feeling their force, which is such as no reasonable man can resist.

Consider its establishment. That a religion so opposite to nature should have established itself by means so gentle, on the one hand, as to use no force or constraint, and so powerful on the other, that no torments could deter its martyrs from confessing it; and not only was this effected without the assistance of any earthly prince, but in spite of all the princes who conspired to oppose it.

Consider the holiness, the dignity, and the humility of a truly Christian soul. The heathen philosophers sometimes raised themselves above the rest of mankind by a more regular mode of life, and by doctrines in some degree conformable to those of Christianity. But they never considered what Christians call humility as a virtue; they even thought it incompatible with the virtues they professed. Nothing but Christianity knew how to unite what till then had appeared so inconsistent, or to teach men, that so far from humility being incompatible with other virtues, without it all other virtues are nothing more than vices and defects.

Consider the infinite wonders displayed in the Holy Scriptures; the grandeur and more than human sublimity of the things they contain, and the admirable simplicity of their style, in which there is nothing forced or affected, and which bears a stamp of truth that nothing can disprove.

Consider Jesus Christ himself? Whatever opinion we entertain of him, it is impossible to deny that he had a most elevated and superior mind, which he evinced at a very early age, before the doctors of the law; yet instead of cultivating his talents by study, and the society of the learned, he passed thirty years of his life in manual labour, and in entire obscurity; and during the three years of his public ministry, he took into his company, and chose for his apostles,

a without science, without study, without repute; ile his enemies were men who passed for the most rned and wise of their time. A strange mode proceeding for a man who intended to establish a r religion!

Consider, also, the persons who were chosen by us Christ as his Apostles; men without learning study, who found themselves at once made able confute the most skilful philosophers, and strong ugh to withstand all the monarchs and tyrants o set themselves in opposition to the Christian gion which they preached.

Consider that miraculous succession of prophets, o followed one another for two thousand years, l who all foretold, in different ways, even the nutest circumstances relating to the life, death, l resurrection of Jesus Christ; the mission of his ostles; the promulgation of the gospel; the consion of the Gentiles, and many other things conning the establishment of Christianity, and the olition of Judaism.

Consider the wonderful accomplishment of those phecies which apply so exactly to the person Jesus Christ, that it is impossible not to recognise a, without being wilfully blind.

Consider the state of the Jewish nation both before l since the coming of Jesus Christ; its flourishing te before his coming, and its most miserable conion since their rejection of him; for to this day y continue without any character of their reli-n; without a temple, without sacrifices, dispersed over the earth, the scorn and derision of every ion.

Consider the perpetuity of Christianity, which has ays subsisted from the beginning of the world, her among the saints under the Old Testament, o lived in expectation of Christ Jesus to come; or ong those who have received him, and believed on n, since he actually did come. No other religion

has this mark of perpetuity, which is the principal character of the true.

Lastly, consider the holiness of this religion; its doctrines, which explain even the greatest contrarieties in man; and all the other uncommon, supernatural, and divine things, which beam forth from every part of it; and let any one judge after all this, if it be possible to doubt that Christianity is the only true religion, and if there ever was any other that could bear a comparison with it.

CHAPTER III.

HE TRUE RELIGION PROVED BY THE CONTRARIETIES WHICH ARE DISCOVERABLE IN MAN, AND BY ORIGINAL SIN.

'HE greatness and the misery of man are both so onspicuous, that the true religion must necessarily ach, that he contains in himself some noble prinple of greatness, and, at the same time, some proound source of misery. For true religion will earch our nature to the bottom, so as perfectly to nderstand all that is great, and all that is miserable n it, together with the reason both of one and the ther. It must also account for those astonishing ontrarieties which we find within us. If there be ut one principle, or efficient cause of all things, and ut one end of all things, true religion must teach s to make him alone the object of our worship and ve. But since we find ourselves unable to worship im whom we know not, and to love anything but urselves, the same religion which enjoins these uties, must also acquaint us with this inability, and ach us how it is to be overcome.

Again, in order to render man happy, it ought to ach us that there is a God, whom we are under bligation to love; that our true felicity consists in eing devoted to him, and our only misery in being eparated from him. It ought to shew us that we re full of darkness, which prevents us from knowing

and loving him; and that thus our duty obliging us to love God, and our concupiscence turning us from him, we are full of unrighteousness. It ought to discover to us the cause of our opposition to God, and our own happiness; the remedies against it, and the means of obtaining them. Let men consider all the religions in the world with regard to these points, and see whether any one, except Christianity, can give satisfaction concerning them.

Shall it be the doctrine of those philosophers, who set before us no other good than what we may find in ourselves? Is this the sovereign good? Have these men discovered the remedy of our evils? Is the proper cure for man's presumption to equal him with God? And those who have levelled us with the beasts, and offer us earthly gratifications as our only felicity, have they revealed the remedy for our lusts? 'Lift up your eyes to God,' say some; 'behold him who has stamped you with his image, and has made you for his worship. You may make yourselves like him; Wisdom, if you follow her directions, will equal you to him.' While others cry out, 'Cast down your eyes to the ground, base worms as you are, and look at the beasts, your companions.

What then is to be the fate of man! Must he be equal to God, or to the beasts? How frightful a disparity is this? What then are we to be? What religion shall instruct us at once to correct our pride and our concupiscence? What religion shall disclose to us our happiness, and our duty; the infirmities which lead us from them, the cure for those infirmities, and the means of obtaining it? Let us hear the answer of the wisdom of God, as it speaks to us in the Christian religion.

It is in vain, O men, to seek from yourselves the remedy for your miseries. All your knowledge can reach no further than this, that you can neither find happiness nor truth in yourselves. Philosophers have promised them to you, but they promised what

they could not perform. They knew neither your real condition, nor your real good. How could they point out the remedy for your diseases, who did not even know what they were. Your greatest evils are pride, which alienates you from God; and concupiscence, which attaches you to earth; and all they did was to cherish either one or the other. If they likened you to God, it was only to gratify your pride, by making you think that your nature resembled the divine: and as for those who saw the extravagance of such pretensions, they only led you to a contrary precipice, by tempting you to believe that your nature was like that of the beasts, that you might be led to place all your happiness in the sensual delights of irrational creatures? This was not the way to convince you of your transgressions. Do not therefore expect truth or consolation from men: I am he that has formed you, and alone can teach you what you are. You are not now in the state in which I created you. I made man holy, innocent, and perfect: I filled him with light and understanding: I made known to him my wonders and my glory. The eye of man then saw the majesty of God. He was not in this darkness which blinds him, nor under this mortality, and these miseries which distress him. But he could not enjoy that glory long without falling into presumption: he wanted to make himself the centre of his happiness, independent of my aid. He withdrew himself from my dominion, and as he pretended to an equality with me, from a desire to find his happiness in himself, I abandoned him to himself; and causing the creatures that were his subjects to revolt against him, I made them his enemies. Man is therefore now become like unto the beasts, and removed so far from me, that he scarcely retains any feeble glimmer of the Author of his being; so much has all his knowledge been either lost or confused. His senses now, being not the servants but often the masters

of his reason, have led him away in the pursuit of pleasure: all the creatures with which he is surrounded, either tempt or afflict him, and exercise a kind of sovereignty over him; either subduing him by their strength, or seducing him by their charms, which is the most imperious and fatal dominion of the two.

Such is the present state and condition of men! Still a feeble instinct remains of the felicity of their primitive nature, while they are plunged in the miseries of their own blindness and lust, which is now their second nature.

From the principles which I have here laid open, we may discern the cause of all those contrarieties which have astonished and divided mankind.

Observe all those emotions of greatness and glory, which the sense of so many miseries is not able to extinguish, and consider whether they can proceed from a less powerful cause than original nature.

Know then, proud mortal, what a paradox thou art to thyself. Let thy weak reason be humbled; let thy frail nature be silent. Know that man infinitely surpasseth man, and learn from thy Master, thy real condition, to which thou art thyself a stranger.

For, in a word, had man never fallen into corruption, he would have continued stedfast in the enjoyment of truth and happiness; and had he never been any other than corrupt, he would have possessed no idea either of truth or happiness. But so great is our misery, (greater than if there had never been any thing noble in our condition,) that we retain an idea of happiness, though we are unable to attain it; we feel some faint notion of truth, while we possess nothing but falsehood; incapable both of absolute ignorance, and of certain knowledge. So manifest is it, that we have once been in a state of perfection, from which we are now unhappily fallen.

What then does this avidity on the one hand, and

this impotence on the other teach us, but that man was originally possessed of a real bliss, of which nothing now remains but the footsteps and empty traces, which he vainly endeavours to fill up with that which surrounds him, seeking in things absent the relief which he does not obtain from such as are present, and which neither the present nor the absent can bestow upon him; because this infinite gulph is only to be filled by an infinite and immutable object?

It is nevertheless astonishing, that of all mysteries, that which seems to be furthest from our apprehension, I mean the transmission of original sin, should yet be that without which we must remain utter strangers to ourselves. For undoubtedly nothing appears more offensive to our reason, than to hear that the transgression of the first man attaches guilt on these, who being so vastly distant from its fountain, seem incapable of being involved in it. This communication is looked upon by us not only as impossible, but even as very unjust. For what can be more repugnant to our miserable rules of justice, than eternally to condemn an infant who is incapable of exercising his will, for an offence in which he appears to have had so little a part, that it was committed six thousand years before he was in existence? Certainly nothing seems to us more harsh than such a doctrine. And yet without admitting this incomprehensible mystery, we are utterly incomprehensible to ourselves. The knot of our present condition has all its turns interwoven in this abyss, insomuch that man is more incomprehensible without this mystery, than the mystery itself is incomprehensible to man.

Original sin is foolishness to men. We allow it to be so. We ought not therefore to reproach reason for not having this knowledge; because it is not pretended that reason can fathom it. But this foolishness is wiser than all the wisdom of men; (the

foolishness of God is wiser than man, 1 Cor. i. 25): for without this what could we say of man? His whole state depends on this imperceptible point. Yet how should he be made acquainted with this by his reason, when it is a thing above his reason, and when reason, instead of discovering it to him at first, disinclines him to believe it when it is presented before him?

These two opposite states of innocence and corruption being once laid open before us, it is impossible we should not recognise them.

Let us trace our own emotions, and observe ourselves; and let us see whether we do not discover the lively characters of these different natures.

How surprising it is, that so many contradictions should be found in one and the same subject?

This two-fold nature of man is so visible, that some have imagined him to have two souls; one single subject appearing to them incapable of such great and sudden transitions, from immeasurable presumption to the most dreadful abjectness of spirit.

Thus the several contrarieties which would seem most calculated to alienate men from the knowledge of any religion, are those very things which would rather conduct them to the true.

As to myself, I confess that as soon as ever the Christian religion has revealed to me this one principle, that human nature is depraved, and fallen from God, this opens my eyes to see every where the proofs of that fact. For nature is now in that state, that every thing, both in us and out of us, bespeaks our loss of God.

Without this divine information, what could men have done but either become vain from the remaining sense of their former grandeur, or dejected by the consciousness of their present infirmity? For not discerning the whole truth, it was impossible for them to arrive at perfect virtue; some looking upon

nature as uncorrupt, and others as irrecoverable, they could not but fall into vanity or sloth, the two great sources of every vice. They could only either give themselves up to vice, through meanness of spirit, or escape from it through pride. For those who knew the excellency of man, were unacquainted with his corruption, so that while they escaped perhaps from indolence, they were lost in conceit; and those who were sensible of the infirmity of nature, were strangers to its dignity, so that while they were delivered from vanity, they plunged themselves into despair.

Hence arose the various sects of the Stoics and Epicureans, the Dogmatists, Academics, &c. The Christian religion alone has been able thoroughly to cure these opposite vices; not driving out one by means of the other, according to the wisdom of this world, but expelling them both by the simplicity of the gospel. For while it exalts the righteous even to a participation of the divinity, it makes them understand, that, in this superior state, they have still within them the fountain of all corruption, which renders them, their whole life long, subject to error, to misery, to death, and to sin; and it assures the most impious, that they still may partake of the grace of their Redeemer. Thus awing those whom it justifies, and comforting those whom it condemns, it so wisely tempers hope with fear, by this two-fold capability both of sin and of grace, which is common to all mankind, that it abases us infinitely more than unassisted reason could do, and yet without driving us to despair; while it exalts us infinitely more than the pride of our nature can do, and yet without rendering us vain; thereby demonstrating, that being alone exempt from error and vice, it belongs only to itself to instruct men, and at the same time to reform them.

We have no idea either of the glorious state of Adam, or of the nature of his transgression, or

of the mode in which it is transmitted to us. These are things which took place in a state of nature very different from ours; they transcend our present capacity, and the knowledge of them would be of no use to deliver us from our miseries. All that is of importance for us to know is this, that through Adam we are miserable, depraved, and at a distance from God; but that we are redeemed by Jesus Christ; and of this we have astonishing proofs in this world.

Christianity is most surprising. It obliges man to acknowledge that he is vile, and even abominable, and yet enjoins him to aspire after a resemblance of God. Were not things thus set against one another, this exaltation would render him extravagantly vain, or such a debasement would render him horribly abject. For misery leads to despair, and a sense of dignity inclines to presumption.

The Incarnation discovers to man the greatness of his misery, by the greatness of the remedy that was needed for his relief.

In the Christian religion we find neither a state of abasement that renders us incapable of good, nor a state of holiness that exempts us from evil.

No doctrine can be more suited to man, than this, which makes him acquainted with his twofold capacity of receiving and falling from grace, on account of the two-fold danger to which he is always exposed, either of despair on the one hand, or of pride on the other.

Philosophers never inspired men with sentiments proportioned to both these conditions. They either inculcated notions of unqualified dignity, which is not the true condition of man; or else of unqualified meanness, which is as little so as the former. We ought to feel a sense of our meanness, not as a character of our original nature, but the effect of repentance; not such as should lead us to continue in that meanness, but such as should make us aspire to greatness. We ought also to have a sense of our

dignity, but of that which proceeds from grace, and not from merit, and which begins by humiliation.

No man is so happy as a real Christian; none so rational, so virtuous, so amiable. How little vanity does he feel when he believes himself united to God! How far is he from abjectness, when he ranks himself with the worms of the earth!

Who then can refuse to believe or adore this heavenly light? For is it not clearer than the day, that we see and feel within ourselves indelible characters of excellence? And is it not equally true, that we experience every hour the effects of our present deplorable condition? What else, therefore, does this chaos, this monstrous confusion in our nature proclaim, but the truth of this double state, and that with a voice so powerful, that it cannot be gainsaid.

CHAPTER IV.

IT IS NOT INCREDIBLE, THAT GOD SHOULD UNITE HIMSELF TO US.

THAT which renders men so reluctant to believe themselves capable of being united to God, is nothing else than a consciousness of their own degradation: yet if this be sincere, let them pursue it as far as I have done, and let them confess that our baseness is in reality such, as makes us unable of ourselves to discover whether his mercy can render us capable of a union with him or not. For I would gladly be informed, whence this creature, that acknowledges itself so weak, has obtained a right to limit the mercy of God, and to set such bounds to it as his fancy may suggest. Man knows so little of the divine essence, that he does not even know what himself is; and yet, all confused as he is at the prospect of his own condition, he takes upon him to say, that God cannot render him capable of communication with himself. But I would ask, whether God requires any thing of him except that he should know him, and love him; and why it is he believes God cannot make himself to be both known and loved by him, seeing he is naturally capable both of knowledge and love. For no man can know otherwise than that he exists, and that there is something he loves. If then he sees any thing in his present

te of darkness, and finds something on earth which gages his affection, why, if God should be pleased impart some rays of his essence, should he be apable of knowing and loving his divine benetor, according as he shall be pleased to reveal nself to him. There is therefore, without doubt, intolerable presumption in such reasonings as se, though seemingly founded on an apparent mility. But our humility can neither be rational, r sincere, unless it makes us confess, that not owing of ourselves what we are, we cannot learn f any but God.

CHAPTER V.

THE PROPER SUBMISSION AND USE OF REASON.

THE furthest stretch of reason is to know that there is an infinite number of things which utterly surpass it; and it must be very feeble indeed, if it reach not so far as to know this.

It is fit we should know, how to doubt where we ought, to be confident where we ought, and to submit where we ought. He who is deficient in these respects, does not yet understand the powers of reason. Yet there are men who err against each of these principles; either considering every thing as demonstrative, because they are unacquainted with the nature of demonstration; or doubting of every thing, because they know not where they ought to submit; or submitting every thing, because they know not where they ought to judge.

If we bring down all things to reason, our religion will have nothing in it mysterious or supernatural. If we violate the principles of reason, our religion will be absurd and ridiculous.

Reason, says St. Austin, would never submit, if it did not judge that on some occasions submission is its duty. It is but just therefore, that it should submit where it sees it ought to submit; and that it should not submit, where it judges upon good grounds it ought not to do it; but great care must be taken that we do not deceive ourselves.

Piety is different from superstition. To carry our piety to superstition is to destroy it. Heretical men reproach us with superstitious submission; and we should be guilty of the charge, if we required men to submit in things which are not the proper matters for submission.

Nothing is so agreeable to reason, as disclaiming of reason in matters of faith: and nothing is so repugnant to reason, as the disuse of reason in things that are not matters of faith: the extremes are equally dangerous, whether we wholly exclude reason, or admit nothing but reason.

Faith says many things concerning which the senses are silent: but nothing which the senses deny: it is always above them, but never contrary to them.

CHAPTER VI.

FAITH WITHOUT REASONING.

If I had but seen a miracle, say some men, I should be converted? They would not talk in this manner, if they knew what conversion really meant. They imagine there is nothing in it but merely to acknowledge there is a God; and that to worship him consists only in uttering certain verbal addresses, but little different from those which the heathens made to their idols. True conversion consists in deep abasement of ourselves, before that sovereign Being whom we have so often provoked, and who every moment might justly destroy us; in acknowledging that we can do nothing without his aid and that we have merited nothing of him but his displeasure. It consists in knowing that there is such an invincible opposition between God and ourselves, that without a mediator, there could not be any communion between us.

Think it not strange, that illiterate persons should believe without reasoning. God gives them the love of his righteousness, and an hatred of themselves. He inclines their hearts to believe. No man ever believes with a true and saving faith, unless God inclines his heart: and no man, when God does incline his heart, can refrain from believing. This David well knew when he prayed, "Incline my *heart,* O God, unto thy testimonies." Ps. cxix. 36.

If some men believe without having examined the proofs of religion, it is because there is produced in them a disposition truly holy; and because what they hear affirmed of our religion is perfectly agreeable to that disposition. They are sensible, that God is their maker; they are resolved to love none but him, and to hate none but themselves; they feel that they are without strength, that they are incapable of going to God, and that, unless he is pleased to come to them, they cannot have any communion with him; and they hear our religion declare, that we are to love God alone, and hate only ourselves; and that, whereas we are altogether corrupt, and incapable of coming to God, God became man, that he might unite himself to us. There needs no more than this to convince men who possess such a disposition of heart, and such knowledge of their duty, of their incapacity to perform it.

Those whom we see become Christians, without the knowledge of prophecies, or other such evidences, form as sound a judgment of their religion as those who have that knowledge. They judge of it by the heart, as others judge by the understanding. God himself inclines them to believe, and by this means they are most effectually persuaded.

I confess, that a Christian who believes without argumentative proof, is not always qualified to convince an infidel, who has a great deal to say for himself. But those who are acquainted with the proofs of religion, can easily demonstrate that such a believer does truly receive his faith from the inspiration of God, though he may not be able to prove it himself.

CHAPTER VII.

THAT THERE IS MORE ADVANTAGE IN BELIEVING, THAN IN DISBELIEVING THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

UNITY added to infinity does not increase it, any more than a foot-measure increases an infinite space. What is finite, vanishes before that which is infinite, and becomes nothing. Thus does our understanding before God; and our righteousness before his righteousness.

There is not so great a disproportion between unity and infinity, as there is between man's righteousness and the righteousness of God.

We know that there is an infinite: but we are ignorant of its nature. For instance, we know that numbers cannot be finite: there must, therefore, be an infinity in number. But we know not what it is. It can neither be equal nor unequal, because adding unity to it, cannot change its nature in the least. So we may certainly know there is a God, without comprehending what he is; and you ought by no means to conclude there is no God, because you cannot perfectly comprehend his nature.

To convince you of his existence, I shall not avail myself of faith, by which we most certainly know it; nor of some other proofs of which we are in possession, because you will not receive them. I shall argue with you only upon your own principles; and I take upon me to show, from the manner in which

you reason every day concerning things of the smallest importance, how you ought to reason respecting this, and which side you ought to take in the decision of this important question concerning the existence of God. You say then, that we are incapable of knowing whether there is a God. Now it is certain, that either there is a God, or there is not; there can be no medium. Which part then shall we choose? Reason, you will say, is not able to determine. There is an infinite chaos between us. We play, as it were, for Cross or Pile, at an infinite distance. For which will you wager? By reason you can assure yourself neither of one nor the other. By reason you can disprove neither one nor the other.

Do not then accuse those of duplicity, who have already made their choice. For you cannot know that they are wrong, and have made a bad one. No, you will say, but I blame them not for making *this* choice, but for making any; he that takes Cross, and he that takes Pile, are both in the wrong; the right had been not to wager at all.

Nay, but there is a necessity to wager; the thing is placed beyond your will; you are actually embarked in it, and by not laying that God is, you in effect lay that he is not. Which side then will you take? Let us balance the gain, and the loss of taking the affirmative. If you gain, you gain every thing; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, therefore, that he is, without delay.—Well I must lay—but perhaps I shall stake too much? Let us see—Supposing the chance to be equal, and that you had two lives to gain, and but one to lose, you might safely lay then. And in case there were ten to win, you would certainly be imprudent not to hazard one life to ten, at a game where the chances were even. But here is an infinite number of lives of infinite happiness, to be won on an equal risk; and the stake you venture is so petty a thing, and of so short a duration, that it is ridiculous to hesitate on the occasion.

It avails nothing to say it is uncertain that you shall win, and that your risk is certain; and that the infinite distance between the certainty of what you venture, and the uncertainty of what you may win, makes the finite good which you expose, equal to the infinite, which is uncertain: for this is not true. Every gamester stakes what is certain against what is uncertain; and yet by venturing a finite certainty for a finite uncertainty, he does not act contrary to reason. There is not an infinite distance between the certainty of what we venture, and the uncertainty of the prize to be gained. There is, indeed, an infinite distance between the certainty of winning, and the certainty of losing. But the uncertainty of winning is proportioned to the certainty of what we venture, according to the proportion of the chances of winning or losing: hence, if there be as many chances on one side as on the other, the game is even; and then the certainty of what we venture is equal to the uncertainty of the prize: so far are they from being infinitely distant; so that the argument is of infinite force, if what we stake be finite, where the chances of winning and losing are equal, and that which may be won is infinite. We have here a demonstration, and if men are capable of comprehending any truth whatever, they cannot but feel the force of this.

I own, and confess it; but are there not some means of seeing a little clearer into this matter? Certainly, through the medium of scripture, and of the other proofs of religion, which are numberless.

Men, you will say, who have the hope of salvation are so far happy; but the fear of hell is a counterpoise to their happiness.

But which, I beseech you, has most cause to be afraid of hell; he that is ignorant whether there is a hell or not, and is certain of damnation if there be: or he who is certainly persuaded there is a hell, but possesses the hope of deliverance from it.

If a man who had but eight days to live, should not think it wisest to consider that as somewhat more than a mere matter of chance, he must have utterly lost his understanding. And were we not enslaved by our passions, eight days and a hundred years would, in this calculation, appear the same thing.

What harm then are you likely to sustain by taking this part. You will be faithful, honest, humble, grateful, beneficent, upright, and sincere. It is true, you will not live in poisoned pleasure, in earthly glory, in sensual delights: but will you not have others more desirable? I tell you, you will gain, even in this life, and that at every step you take in this path, you will discover so much certainty of advantage, and so much nullity in what you hazard, that at length you will find you have betted for a sure and infinite profit, and have in effect risked nothing to obtain it.

You say, you are so made as to be incapable of believing: at least then be persuaded of your incapacity, since although reason invites you to it, still you cannot believe. Labour then to be convinced, not by augmenting the proofs of a Deity, but by diminishing the power of your passions. You would arrive at faith, but you know not the way: you would be cured of your infidelity, and you ask what are its remedies: learn them from those who were once in your condition, but are at present without any doubt. They know the path which you would find: they have recovered from the disease of which you wish to be healed. Pursue the method with which they began: imitate their external actions, if you cannot as yet, participate their inward dispositions: quit those vain amusements which have hitherto entirely employed you.

I should soon have quitted these pleasures, say you, if I had but had faith. And I say, on the other hand, you would soon have had faith, if you had quitted your pleasures. It is your part to begin. I

would give you faith if I could; I am unable to do this; and, consequently, to put the truth of what you say to the test: but you may easily abandon your pleasures; and put the truth of what I say to the test.

We must not forget our own nature; we are body as well as spirit; and hence it comes to pass, that the instrument by which conviction is produced, is not demonstration only. How few things are there demonstrated? Demonstrations act only on the mind; but custom produces our strongest convictions: it engages the senses, and they incline the understanding, without even giving it time for thought. Who has ever demonstrated the certainty of to-morrow's light, or of our own death! And yet what is more universally believed? Custom, therefore, persuades us of it. Custom makes so many men Pagans and Turks; and so many artisans, soldiers, &c. It is true that we ought not to begin with custom in our inquiries after truth; but we must have recourse to it, when once we have discovered where truth is, in order to refresh and invigorate our belief, which every passing hour inclines us to forget; for a regular train of arguments cannot always be present to our minds. We want something more easy, a habit of believing, which, without violence, or art, or argument, compels our assent, and so inclines all our powers toward it, that we naturally fall into it. It will not be sufficient that we are willing to believe any thing upon the force of conviction, when our senses are soliciting us to believe directly the contrary. The two parts of ourselves must always proceed in concert; the understanding by those arguments which it is sufficient once in our lives to have understood; the senses by habit, and not by suffering them to take a contrary bias.

CHAPTER VIII.

DESCRIPTION OF A MAN WHO HAS WEARIED HIMSELF WITH SEARCHING AFTER GOD BY REASONING ALONE, AND WHO IS NOW BEGINNING TO READ THE SCRIPTURES.

When I consider the blindness and misery of man, and those amazing contrarieties which discover themselves in his nature; when I observe the whole creation to be silent, and man left in darkness, abandoned to himself, and, as it were, wandering in this corner of the universe, neither knowing who placed him there, nor what he came to do, nor what will become of him when he dies; I am struck with the same horror as a man who has been carried in his sleep into some desolate and frightful island, and who awakes without knowing where he is, or how he can make his escape. And, upon this view, I am astonished that so miserable a state is not productive of despair. I see other persons near me, of the same nature with myself: I ask them if they are any better informed than I am; they tell me they are not; I then observe, that these miserable wanderers, having looked round, and espied certain objects that please them, have given themselves up to them, and are careless about every thing else. For my own part, I could not continue, nor be at rest in the society of persons like myself, miserable like me, impotent like me. I see they will be able to give me no assistance at my death: I shall die alone; and, therefore, I must act as if I were alone. Now if I were alone, I

should not build houses, I should not perplex myse with the tumult of affairs: I would court the estee of no one; but would devote myself entirely to th discovery of truth.

Hence reflecting how probable it seems, that the is something besides what I now see, I inquire wh ther that God of whom all the world speaks, has le any marks of himself. I look round on all side and see nothing but obscurity. Nature exhibi nothing but matter of doubt and disquiet. If I coul no where discern any mark of divinity, I woul resolve not to believe at all: If I could in every thir see the stamp of a Creator, I would rest in settle belief. But while I see too much to deny, and to little to make me certain, my condition renders n an object of pity; and I have a hundred times wishe that if there be a God who is the supporter of na ture, she would shew him without ambiguity: an that if the characters she exhibits are fallacious, sh would conceal them altogether. Let her either sh all or nothing, that I may know which part I shoul take. Whereas in my present situation, ignoran of what I am, and of what I ought to do, I kno neither my condition nor my duty. My heart i wholly bent on knowing where the chief good is, i order that I may pursue it; nor should I think an thing too dear to obtain it.

I observe a multitude of religions in all countrie and times. But they are such as can neither pleas me with their morals, nor satisfy me with their proofs so that I would at once reject the religion of Mahc met, of the Chinese, of ancient Rome, or of Egyp for this single reason,—that as no one of them ca produce more marks of truth than another, and nei ther of them contains any thing decisive, reaso cannot incline me to one of them more than to eithe of the rest.

But while I am reflecting on this strange and un accountable variety in the manners and creeds c

different periods, I find in one little corner of the world, a peculiar people, separated from all the other nations of the earth, whose registers exceed, by many ages, the most ancient histories that we possess. I discover this great and numerous people who worship but one God, and are governed by a law which they affirm themselves to have received from his hand. They maintain that they are the only persons in the world to whom God has made a revelation of his mysteries; that all men are corrupt, and under the divine displeasure; that they are all abandoned to their own senses and imaginations, from whence proceed their endless wanderings, and continual changes in their customs and religion, while their nation alone has continued unalterable in both. But, that God will not for ever leave the rest of the nations in this darkness; that there shall come a Saviour for them all; that they are established in the world to announce his arrival; that they were formed on purpose to be the heralds of this glorious event, and to call upon all nations to unite with them in the expectation of this Redeemer.

On meeting with this people, I am surprised, and they seem to me deserving the closest attention, on account of the many wonderful and singular things discoverable in them.

They are a people composed entirely of brethren: And whereas all others have been constituted by an assemblage of an almost infinite number of families, these, though so prodigiously fruitful, have all descended from one man; and thus being as it were one flesh, and members one of another, they compose a formidable power from one single family. This is unparalleled.

They are the most ancient people that mankind have any knowledge of; a circumstance which, in my opinion, entitles them to very particular veneration, especially in regard to our present inquiry; because, if God has in all ages vouchsafed to reveal him-

self to mankind, these are the persons to whom we must have recourse in order to know that revelation.

Nor are they considerable only in point of antiquity, they are no less singular in their duration, having always subsisted from their origin to this day. For while the several people of Greece, Italy, Sparta, Athens, Rome, and others which sprung up long after them, have been many ages extinct, these have always subsisted, and in spite of the contrivances of many great and powerful princes, who have a hundred times attempted their destruction, (as history testifies, and as it is natural to infer, from the ordinary revolutions of things, during so long a course of years,) they have always been preserved, and extending from the earliest to the latest times, their annals comprise a period equal in length to all the rest of our histories together.

The law by which this people is governed, is in all respects the most ancient and most perfect in the world, and the only one which has always been preserved without interruption in a state. This Philo, the Jew, has demonstrated in several places; and Josephus, most admirably, in his discourse against Appion, where he shews it to be so high in respect of antiquity, that the very name of a law was not known in the most ancient nations for more than a thousand years after; insomuch that Homer, though he has spoken of so many different nations, has not once used the word. And we may easily judge of the perfection of this law, from merely reading it by which we shall discern it to have provided for every thing with so much wisdom, justice, and equity, that the most ancient legislators of Greece and Rome have borrowed their principal institutions from thence, as is evident from the laws of the *twelve tables*, and by other proofs which Josephus has produced.

Yet this law is, at the same time, severe and rigorous beyond all others, obliging the people, in order to retain them in their duty, to a thousand pe-

culiar and painful observances, under penalty of death; so that it is a most astonishing thing that it should have been preserved for so many ages amongst a rebellious and impatient people, as we know the Jews to have been; while all other states have changed their laws from time to time, though such, on the contrary, as were easily observed.

This same people are also to be admired for their sincerity. They preserve, with fidelity and affection, the very book in which Moses declares them to have been always ungrateful towards God, and that he foresaw they would be still more so after his death; in which he therefore calls heaven and earth to witness against them, as to the sufficiency of the warning which he had given them; and finally, declares that God being incensed against them, should scatter them through all the nations of the earth; and that as they had "provoked him to jealousy by serving gods which were no gods," he also should "provoke them," by calling "a people which were not his people." Nevertheless this book which condemns them in so many ways, they preserve at the expence of their lives. Such sincerity as this is without example in the world, and does not spring from the nature of man.

To conclude: I find no reason to suspect the authority of the book which contains all these particulars; for there is a very great difference between a book composed by an individual, and dispersed amongst a people, and a book which the people themselves have compiled. In this case the antiquity of the book and of the people is undoubtedly the same.

These writings, moreover, were composed by authors contemporary to the facts which they record. All histories compiled by persons of a period different from that of the actions they describe, are suspicious; as the books of the Sybils, of Hermes Trismegistus, and many others, which gained credit in the world, and have since been detected as forgeries. But this is not the case with contemporary authors.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS AND DEPRAVITY OF MAN.

MAN is evidently made for thinking; this is th whole of his dignity, and the whole of his meri To think as he ought, is the whole of his duty; an the true order of thinking is to begin with himsel his author, and his end. And yet what is it that i thought of in the world? Not one of these objects but how to take pleasure, how to grow rich, how t gain reputation, how to make ourselves kings, with out ever reflecting what it is to be a king, or even t be a man.

Human thought is a thing wonderful in its natur It must have prodigious defects to become con temptible, and yet it has such, that nothing can b more ridiculous. How great is it by its nature! ho despicable by its defects!

If there be a God, it is our duty to love him, an not creatures. The reasoning of the wicked de scribed in the book of *Wisdom*, (chap. ii.) is founde on the persuasion that there is no God. And th being taken for granted, Now, say they, we will hav our fill of the creatures; but if they had known th there really is a God, they would have conclude directly the contrary. And this is the conclusio of the wise—There is a God; let us not, therefor seek happiness in creatures. Every thing whic

incites us to confine ourselves to creatures is evil, because it either hinders us from serving God, if we already know him, or from seeking him, if we know him not. We are full of concupiscence, therefore we are full of evil; and if so, we ought to detest ourselves, and all that attaches us to any thing else but to God alone.

When we endeavour to think of God, how many things do we feel diverting us from him, and tempting us to think of somewhat else? All this is evil, and evil that we bring with us into the world.

It is not true that we deserve that others should love us; nor is it just that we should so eagerly covet it. If we were born thoroughly reasonable, and with any proper knowledge of ourselves, we should not entertain such a desire. And yet this attends us from our birth. We are therefore unrighteous from our birth, for every man's object is himself. This is contrary to order. Our object should be the general good; and this bias towards ourselves is the first spring of all disorder, in war, in government, and in domestic affairs.

If the members of all communities, both natural and civil, should each seek the good of their respective bodies, so every community ought to aim at the welfare of the general body, of which it is only a part.

Whosoever does not detest in his own heart that self-love, that instinct which prompts him to set himself above every thing else, is most wretchedly blind; for nothing is more opposite to justice and truth. For we do not deserve such a preference, and it is unjust and impossible to obtain it, because all seek the very same thing. It is therefore a manifest injustice, in which we are born, which we cannot shake off, and yet ought to get rid of.

Nevertheless, no religion but the Christian has informed us that this is a sin, or that we are born under its power, or that we are bound to strive

against it; nor has any one thought of a metho its cure.

There is an internal war in man, between reason and his passions. He might enjoy some of repose, if he had reason without passion passions without reason. But, since he is actu by both, he lives in continual disquiet, and never be at peace with the one, without being at with the other. Hence he is always divided, always at variance with himself.

If it be an unnatural degree of blindness to utterly unconcerned about what we are, it is a more terrible thing to live wickedly, when we bel there is a God; and yet the greater part of man are under one or other of these infatuations.

CHAPTER X.

THE JEWS.

ing determined to make it appear that he
to form a people spiritually holy, and to
with eternal glory, represented in the
of nature, what he intended to accomplish
of grace, that men might conclude he could
that which is invisible, from their observa-
hat which is visible.

erefore saved his people from the deluge, in
n of Noah; he caused them to spring from
; he redeemed them from their enemies,
ght them into the rest which he had pro-
em.

sign of God was not to save them from the
and to produce a whole nation from Abra-
rely for the sake of conducting them into a
plenty. But as nature is an image of grace,
visible miracles were symbols of the in-
hich he intended to perform.

er reason for which he formed the Jewish
was, that, as he intended to abridge his
of carnal and perishable enjoyments, he
ed to evince, by such a series of miracles,
as not for want of power to bestow them.

people were immersed in these earthly con-
at God loved their father Abraham, his
and all who descended from him; that, for

this reason, he had multiplied them and dist guished them from all other people, not even suff ing them to mix with other nations; had delive them out of Egypt, with all those wonderful si which he performed in their favour; had fed th with manna in the wilderness; had brought th into a fruitful and happy country; had given th kings, and a magnificent temple, for the offering of beasts, and the purification of themselves by t blood; and that he would at length send them Messiah, who was to render them masters of whole world.

The Jews were accustomed to great and splen miracles; and, hence, looking on those perfor at the Red Sea, and in the land of Canaan as o an abridgment of the mighty things their Mess was to effect, they expected from him actions more illustrious, of which all that Moses had d was only a pattern.

When they were now grown old in these ca errors, Jesus Christ actually came at the time f told, but not with that outward splendour they pected; and hence they did not believe it was h After his death St. Paul was sent to instruct m that all these things happened in figure, that kingdom of God was not in the flesh, but in spirit; that the enemies of men were not the Baby nians, but their own passions; that God deligh not in a temple made with hands, but in a pure humble mind; that bodily circumcision was unp fitable, and that of the heart indispensable, &c.

God not having thought fit to disclose these thi to so unworthy a people, and nevertheless hav designed to foretel them, in order that they might believed, predicted clearly the time of their acc plishment, and sometimes declared them plainly, generally under figures, to fix the attention of th who loved figurative representations; and yet *that* those who loved the things figured might be a

to discern them. Hence the people were divided at the time of the Messiah; those who were spiritual received him, and those who were carnal, and rejected him, remain to this day as witnesses for him.

The carnal Jews understood neither the greatness nor the humiliation of the Messiah, which were foretold by the prophets. They mistook his true greatness, when they were assured that he should be David's *Lord*, although he was his *Son;* that he was before Abraham, and had seen him. They did not conceive he was so great, as to have existed from all eternity. And they no less mistook him in his humiliation and death. "The Messiah (say they) abideth for ever, and this man declares that he shall die." Therefore they neither believed him to be mortal nor eternal: they looked to the Messiah for nothing but worldly aggrandizement.

They were so fond of the figures, and so literally expected them, that they mistook the substance, when it came, at the time and in the manner that had been foretold.

Men indisposed to believing, are wont to shelter themselves under the unbelief of the Jews. If all this, say they, was so clear, why did not the Jews believe in him? Whereas their rejection of him is a ground for our faith. If they had believed, we should be less disposed to believe. We should then have a more colourable pretext for incredulity and distrust. This is wonderful indeed, to see the Jews at once such ardent lovers of the things which were prophesied, and yet such violent haters of the accomplishment of those very prophecies; and that this hatred itself should have been also foretold.

To give sufficient credibility to the Messiah, it was necessary that certain prophecies should precede his appearance, and should remain in the custody of unsuspected persons, of diligence, fidelity, and ex-

traordinary zeal, and such as were known to the rest of mankind.

That things might succeed accordingly, God made choice of this carnal people, to whom he entrusted the predictions concerning the Messiah, which described him as a deliverer, and a dispenser of carnal blessings, which they loved. Hence they had an extraordinary zeal for their prophets, and held out to all the world those books which foretold the Messiah; assuring all nations that he would certainly come, in the very manner expressed by their records, which they kept open to the view of the whole world. But being deceived by his coming in such a mean and ignominious condition, they became his greatest opposers. So that here is a people, who of all mankind can be least suspected of favouring us, nevertheless supporting our cause, and, by the zeal which they shew for their law and their prophets, preserving, with the most incorruptible exactness, our evidences and their own condemnation.

Those who have rejected and crucified Jesus Christ, who was an offence to them, are the same people who preserved those writings which testify concerning him, and which affirm that he shall be despised and rejected by them. Thus their refusal of him has borne express testimony to him; and he has been equally demonstrated by the righteous Jews who received him, and by the wicked Jews who rejected him; both having been exactly foretold.

For this reason the prophecies have a double sense, one spiritual, to which this people were strongly averse, concealed under a literal one, which they liked. If the spiritual sense had been disclosed to them, as they were unable to embrace it, and could not have borne it, they would have had very little zeal to preserve their writings and ceremonial institutions: and if they had relished these *spiritual* promises, and preserved them uncorrupted

ll the time of the Messiah, their evidence would ıve been deprived of its force, as being the testiony of his friends. We see, therefore, the necessity r veiling the spiritual sense: but yet, on the other ınd, if its obscurity had been too deep for dis›very, it could not have been an evidence of the [essiah. What, therefore, was done? The spiritual ınse was disguised under the literal in most places, ıt in some was expressly and clearly delivered. [oreover, the time and state of the world were so ıactly foretold, that the sun itself is not clearer. nd there are some passages in which the spiritual eaning is so clearly explained, that no blindness ıort of that which the flesh brings upon a mind that entirely enslaved by it, can withhold us from iscerning it.

Such then was the conduct of God. In an infinite ımber of places the spiritual sense is covered over ith another; yet in some, though rarely, it is openly vealed, but in such a manner, that the passages in hich it is concealed admit of both interpretations, hile those in which it is explained can admit only the spiritual.

This method could not therefore lead men into ror; nor could any, but a people whose heart was entirely carnal, have misunderstood it.

For when good things were promised them in ›undance, what could hinder them from interpreting ese promises of real blessings, but their concupi›ence, which made them explain them of earthly lvantages? Whereas those whose only treasure as in God, would have referred them entirely to od. For there are two principles which divide the ills of men, concupiscence and charity. It is not, deed, impossible that concupiscence should co-exist ith faith, or charity with temporal possessions: but ›ncupiscence avails itself of God, to enjoy the world; e latter makes use of the world, but enjoys God.

Again, the end which we pursue is that which

gives names to things. Whatever hinders us in t prosecution of that, we consider as an enemy. Th the creatures, which are good in themselves, are t enemies of good men, when they lead them from Go and God himself is accounted an enemy by the whom he thwarts in their lusts.

Hence the appellation of enemy being appli according to the end men have in view, good m understood it of their passions, and carnal men the Babylonians; so that these terms were o obscure to the wicked. And this was the meani of Isaiah, when he said, "Seal the law among disciples," Isa. viii. 16; and that Christ should "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence," (v. 1 "but blessed are those who shall not be offended i him, Matt. xi. 6. Hosea also says the same thin "Who is wise, and he shall understand the things; prudent, and he shall know them? For t ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk them; but transgressors shall fall therein." Hos. xiv.

Yet the Old Testament was so framed, that wh it enlightened some, and blinded others, it demo strated in the latter the truth which it revealed to t former. For the visible blessings which they receiv from God, were so great and divine, that they e dently testified his power to give them those whi were invisible, and also a Messiah.

The time of our Lord's first coming is expres foretold; but that of his second is not. Because t first was to be private, whereas the second will glorious, and so manifest, that his enemies the selves will acknowledge him. But though his fi appearance was to be obscure, and discernible o by those who searched the scriptures, God had ordered things, that all this contributed to chan terize him. The Jews proved him by receiving hi for they were depositaries of the prophecies, and th proved him also by rejecting him, because in t *they* accomplished the prophecies.

The Jews had both miracles and prophecies which they saw fulfilled; the peculiar doctrine of their law was the love and adoration of only one God; and this was perpetual: it had therefore every mark of the true religion; and so it really was. But we are to distinguish between the doctrine of the Jews, and the doctrine of the law of the Jews. For the doctrine of the Jews was not true, although it had miracles and prophecies and perpetuity on its side; because it was deficient in the main principle, of loving and adoring God only.

The Jewish religion must therefore be considered very differently in the tradition of their saints, and in the tradition of the people. Its morality and happiness are both ridiculous, according to the tradition of the people; but they are incomparable in that of their saints. Its foundation is wonderful; it is the most ancient and most authentic book in the world: and whereas Mahomet, that his writings might continue, has forbidden them to be read; Moses, that *his* might continue, has commanded every body to read them.

The religion of the Jews is altogether divine in its authority, its duration, its perpetuity, its morality, its conduct, its doctrine, its effects. It was formed as a representation of the reality of the Messiah; and the reality of the Messiah was made evident by the Jewish religion, which represented him.

Under the Jewish economy truth appeared only in figure: in heaven it is without veil: in the church it is veiled, but discerned by its correspondence to the figure. As the figure was first built upon the truth, so the truth is now distinguishable by the figure.

He that forms his judgment of the Jewish religion, by its exterior, will judge wrongly. It is to be seen in the sacred writings, and in the traditions of the prophets, who sufficiently proved that they did not understand the law according to the letter. Our religion, in like manner, is divine in the gospel, in

the apostles, and in its traditions; but it is utterly disfigured in those who treat it injudiciously.

The Jews were of two classes, some were merely Pagan in their affections, while others were really Christian.

The Messiah, according to the carnal Jews, *was to be* a mighty temporal prince. According to carnal Christians, he *is come* to dispense with our loving God, and to give us sacraments which shall do every thing without us. This is no more the religion of Christians, than that was the religion of the Jews.

The true Jews and true Christians agree in acknowledging a Messiah, who shall make them love God, and by that love shall make them triumph over their enemies.

The veil which is upon the scriptures, in respect to the carnal Jews, is there, likewise, in respect to wicked Christians, and all those who do not hate themselves. But how well are we disposed to understand them, and to become acquainted with Jesus Christ, when we are once made properly to abhor ourselves!

Carnal Jews fill the middle places between Christians and Pagans. The Pagans knew not God, and loved nothing but the world. The Jews knew the true God, and still loved nothing but the world. Christians know the true God, and love not the world: Jews and Pagans love the same world: Christians and Jews know the same God.

The Jews are a people visibly framed to be the standing witnesses of the Messiah. They preserve the Scriptures; they love them, and yet do not understand them. And all this has been foretold; for it is said, that the statutes of God should be delivered to them, but "as a book that is sealed."

So long as there were prophets to support the law, the people were negligent; but when the prophets ceased, the zeal of the people supplied their place; *which* is a providence too remarkable to be overlooked.

CHAPTER XI.

MOSES.

WHEN the creation of the world became a distant event, God provided a contemporary historian, and appointed a whole nation for the keepers of his history, in order that it might be the most authentic in the world, and that all mankind might hence be informed of a fact, which it was so necessary for them to know, and yet was impossible to be known in any other way.

Moses was a very able man. This is indisputable. Had he, therefore, written with a design to deceive, he would have done it in such a manner as not to be convicted of the deceit. He has, however, done just the reverse; for if what he delivered had been fabulous, there was not a single Jew but could have detected the imposture.

Why, for instance, does he make the lives of the first men so long, and their generations so few? In a multitude of generations he might have sheltered himself from discovery; but in so few this was impracticable. For it is not the number of years, but the multitude of generations, which renders things obscure.

Truth is enfeebled only by the changes among men. Yet he places the two greatest events that were ever conceived, the creation and the deluge, so close together, that they touch, as it were, from

the few generations which he reckons between them. Insomuch, that at the time of his registering these things, the memory of them could not but be still fresh in the minds of all the Jewish nation.

Lamech had seen Adam; Shem had seen Lamech; Abraham, Shem; Jacob, Abraham; and Moses those who had seen Jacob. Therefore the creation and the deluge are indubitably true. This will be acknowledged as conclusive by certain persons, who will readily understand it.

The longevity of the Patriarchs, instead of contributing to the decay of past facts, served, on the contrary, to their preservation. For the reason why we are not often sufficiently instructed in the history of our ancestors is, because we have seldom lived with them, or because they died before we attained the age of reason. But when men lived to so great an age, children lived long with their parents, and had much opportunity of conversing with them; now what could have been the subject of their conversation, but the history of their progenitors; since this comprised all history whatever, and men were not then acquainted with the arts and sciences, which now take up so large a share in our discourse. And it is evident that the keeping exact genealogies was the peculiar care of those earlier times.

CHAPTER XII.

FIGURES.

THERE are some figures clear and demonstrative, and there are others which appear less natural, and prove nothing but to those who have been previously convinced. The latter resemble those of some men who build prophecies on the Revelations, which they expound according to their own fancy. But there is this difference between them, that they have no infallible predictions to support those which they introduce. So that they are guilty of the highest injustice when they pretend theirs to be as well grounded as some of ours; because they have not any others which are incontestible, as we have. The case therefore is by no means parallel. We are not to level and confound things which agree in one respect, when they are so vastly different in another.

Jesus Christ, prefigured by Joseph, the beloved of his father, and by him sent to visit his brethren, is the innocent person whom his brethren sold for twenty pieces of silver; and who, by this means, became their Lord, their Saviour, the Saviour of strangers, and of the whole world; which had not happened but for their plot of destroying him, making him an outcast, and selling him for a slave.

Joseph was an innocent man in prison between two criminals; Jesus on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretels deliverance to one of his companions,

and death to the other from the same tokens; Jesus Christ saves one and leaves the other, after the same crimes. Joseph could only foretel; Jesus Christ performed what he foretold. Joseph requests the person who should be delivered, to be mindful of him in his glory; the man saved by Jesus Christ, entreats he will remember him when he comes into his kingdom.

Grace is the figure of glory; for it is not the ultimate object. It was prefigured by the law, and it prefigures glory; but so that it is itself the way to arrive at glory.

The synagogue was not destroyed, because it was the figure of the church; and because it was only the figure, it fell into servitude. The figure subsisted till the arrival of the substance, that the church might always be visible, either in the representation or the reality.

CHAPTER XIII.

THAT THE LAW WAS FIGURATIVE.

To establish at once the authority of both Testaments, we have only to observe, whether that which is prophesied in the one, be accomplished in the other.

In order to examine the prophecies, we must first of all understand them. For, supposing them to have but one sense, the Messiah cannot be come; but, supposing them to have two senses, he certainly is come, in the person of Jesus Christ.

All the question, therefore, is, whether they have a double meaning? Whether they are figures or realities; that is to say, whether we ought to seek something more in them than immediately presents itself, or whether we ought to confine ourselves to that construction which offers itself at first view?

If the law and the sacrifices were the substance, they would necessarily be acceptable to God, and not be displeasing to him. If they were only figurative, they would be both pleasing and displeasing to him, in different respects. Now, throughout the Scripture, they both please and displease him; therefore they were only figurative.

To see clearly that the old dispensation was merely figurative, and that the prophets when they spake of temporal blessings had others in view, we have only to consider, first, that it would be unworthy of God

to call men to the enjoyment of nothing but temporal happiness; and secondly, that while the words of the prophets clearly convey a promise of temporal blessings, they yet affirm that their expressions are obscure, that their meaning is not that which appears obvious at first, and that it would only be understood by the issue of events. They therefore knew they were speaking of other sacrifices, another deliverer, &c.

It must also be remarked, that their expressions would contradict and invalidate each other, if by the words *law* and *sacrifice*, only the law and the sacrifices instituted by Moses are to be understood. Nay, there would be a manifest and gross contradiction in their writings, and sometimes even in the same chapter. From whence it follows, that they must have had something further in prospect.

It is said, that the law shall be changed; that the sacrifice shall be changed; that they shall be without kings, without princes, and without sacrifices; that a new covenant shall be established; that the law shall be renewed; that the commandments they had received were not good; that their sacrifices were abominable, and that God had not required them.

It is also said, on the other hand, that the law shall abide for ever; that the covenant shall be eternal, the sacrifices perpetual; that the sceptre should never depart from them, till the everlasting King was come. Do these expressions prove the law to be the substance? No. Do they demonstate it to be the figure? No. But that it must be either the substance or the figure. Now the former by excluding the substance, prove it can only be the figure.

All these passages taken together cannot be applied to the substance; but they may be all applied to the figure; therefore, they were spoken of the figure, and not of the substance.

To know whether the law and the sacrifices are

real or figurative, we must take notice whether the prophets in speaking of these things, had their views and their thoughts so entirely fixed on them, as to look no further than the old covenant; or whether they did not discern somewhat else, of which all this was a representation; for in a picture we discover the thing represented. Now in order to this, we need only examine what they say.

When they say the covenant shall be everlasting, do they mean the same which they affirm shall be changed? And so of the sacrifices, &c.

The prophets have expressly said, that Israel shall always be beloved of God, and that the law shall endure for ever. But they have likewise said, that their meaning was hidden, and would not be understood.

We have a double meaning in a writing in cypher. Suppose we intercept an important letter, in which we are told there is one obvious meaning, and that, nevertheless, the sense is so obscured, that we shall even see the letter without seeing it, and understand it without understanding it; what are we to judge, but that the cypher has a two-fold meaning? which is moreover apparent from the evident contradictions we meet with in the literal construction of it. How ought we then to esteem those who decipher this writing to us, and make us acquainted with its hidden meaning; especially when they go upon principles perfectly natural and clear. This is what Jesus Christ and his apostles have done: they have opened the seal, they have rent the veil, and laid open the spiritual sense. They have taught us, that our enemies are our passions; that our Redeemer is to be a spiritual Redeemer; that he is to have a first and a second coming; the one in humility to abase the proud, the other in glory to exalt the humble; that Jesus Christ is God, as well as man.

Jesus Christ made it his whole business to teach men that they were lovers of themselves; that they

were enslaved, blind, distempered, miserable, and sinful; that it was needful he should deliver them; enlighten them, bless them, and heal them. That this was to be effected by hating themselves, and following him by poverty, and the death of the cross.

"The letter killeth." It was necessary that Christ should suffer. In a God who has humbled himself; in circumcision of the heart; a true fast, a true sacrifice, a true temple, a two-fold law, a two-fold table of the law, a two-fold captivity,—we behold the cypher he has presented to us.

He has now taught us that all these things were but figures; and what it is to be truly free; to be a true Israelite; wherein consists true circumcision, the true bread of heaven, &c.

By these promises every one may detect which lies nearest his heart, spiritual or temporal blessings; God or creatures; but with this difference,—that they who look in the promises only for creatures, find them attended with numerous contradictions, with a prohibition to love them, and with a command to worship God alone; and to love nothing but him; whereas they who seek God in them, find him without any contradiction, and with a pleasing command to love none but him only.

The sources of the contrarieties in Scriptures, are a God humbled to the death of the cross; a Messiah triumphing over death by dying himself; the two natures in Jesus Christ; his two-fold coming; and the two states of the nature of man.

As we cannot justly describe a man's character without accounting for all his contrarieties, and as it is not enough to pursue a train of agreeable qualities, without explaining those which appear to be opposite; so in order to understand the sense of an author, all the contrary passages must be reconciled.

In order, therefore, to understand Scripture, we *must* have a sense in which all the opposite passages

agree. It is not sufficient to have one in which many consonant passages unite, but we must have one in which the most dissonant shall agree.

Every author either has a meaning in which all the different passages will agree, or he has no meaning at all. The latter cannot be said of the Scriptures, nor of the prophets; they unquestionably had too much good sense. We must therefore look out for a meaning by which all the discordant parts may be reconciled.

Their true sense, therefore, cannot be that of the Jews. But in Jesus Christ all the contradictions are harmonized.

The Jews could not make the abrogation of the royalty and principality, foretold by Hosea, accord with the prophecy of Jacob.

If we take the law, the sacrifices, and the kingdom, for the things ultimately designed, we shall not be able to reconcile all the passages of the same author, nor of the same book, nor often of the same chapter; and this sufficiently discovers the intention of the author.

The Jews were not permitted to offer sacrifice, or so much as to eat the tenths, out of Jerusalem, which was the place that the Lord had chosen.

Hosea foretold, that the Jews should be "without a king, without a prince, without sacrifice, and without idols." Which is at this time accomplished; for no sacrifice can be legally offered out of Jerusalem.

Whenever the word of God, which is true, would be false if taken literally, it is true spiritually. "Sit thou on my right-hand;" literally this is false, yet spiritually it is true. In such expressions God speaks after the manner of men; and this only implies, that the same intentions as men have in making others sit at their right-hand, God will also have with respect to the Messiah. It is therefore a mark of the divine intention, but not of the manner in which it is to be carried into effect.

So when it is said to the Israelites, God has received the odour of your incense, and will give you in recompense a fertile and plentiful land, the meaning is, that the same intention which a man delighted with your incense, would have in rewarding you with a fruitful land, God will express towards you; because you have had the same intention with respect to him, that a man would express toward another, by offering him incense.

The sole aim of the Scripture is charity. All that does not directly tend to that single point is the figure of it. For as there is but one end in view, whatever does not lead to it in express terms, is figurative.

God, in compassion to our weakness, which makes us seek for variety, has so diversified this one precept of charity, that he leads by this very variety to the "one thing needful" for us. For one thing only is needful, and we love variety. Now God provides for both these facts, by a variety which always leads to the one thing needful.

The Rabbins take the "breasts of the spouse" for figure; as they do every thing which does not express the only end they have in view, namely, temporal blessings.

Some of them see clearly enough, that the only enemy of man is concupiscence, which turns him away from God; and that God alone, and not a fruitful land, is his real good.

Those who fancy the good of man to consist in gratifying the flesh, and his evil in what draws him off from the pleasures of sense, let them wallow and die in their pleasures. But as for those who seek God with their whole heart, whom nothing can grieve but being deprived of the light of his countenance, whose only desire is to enjoy him, and whose only enemies are those which withhold them from him; whose affliction it is to see themselves surrounded and overruled by such enemies, let them be com-

ferted; for them there is a deliverer, for them there is a God! The Messiah was promised to deliver men from their enemies; and he came to deliver them from their sins, and not from their external foes.

When David predicts that the Messiah shall deliver his people from their enemies, a carnal expositor may apply this to the Egyptians; and then I could not shew him that the prophecy has been fulfilled. But it may be well applied to men's iniquities, since the Egyptians are not men's real enemies, but their iniquities are. So that the word enemy is ambiguous.

But as he also declares, together with Isaiah and others, that the Messiah shall deliver his people from their sins, the ambiguity is taken off, and the double meaning of enemies is reduced to the single interpretation of iniquities. For if he had sins in view, he might well denote them by the term enemies; but if he had only temporal enemies in view, it was impossible he should distinguish them by the appellation of sins.

Now Moses, David, and Isaiah, all employ the same terms. Who then can say that these terms have not the same sense; and that the intention of David, who evidently means sins when he speaks of men's enemies, is not the same as that of Moses when he is speaking of their enemies.

Daniel, in his ninth chapter, prays that the people may be delivered from the captivity of their enemies; but he thought of their transgressions: and to make it clear, he relates the coming of Gabriel to him, to assure him he was heard; and that he had only to wait seventy weeks, after which the people should obtain deliverance from their iniquity, that transgression should be brought to an end, and the Redeemer, the Holy of holies, should bring in not legal, but everlasting righteousness.

When we are once let into this mystery, it is im-

possible not to discern it. Let us read the old testament with this view; let us see whether the sacrifices were real sacrifices, whether Abraham's lineage was the true cause of the friendship of God to him? Whether the promised land was the true place of rest? Neither of these can be affirmed; therefore they were only symbolical. In a word, let us examine all the legal ceremonies, and all the precepts which are not of charity, and we shall find they are nothing but representations.

CHAPTER XIV.

JESUS CHRIST.

THE infinite distance between body and spirit is a figure of the infinitely more infinite distance between our spirit and charity, which is absolutely supernatural.

All the splendour of outward grandeur has no lustre in the eyes of those who are engaged in mental researches.

The greatness of men of talents is invisible to the rich, to kings, and conquerors, and to all these earthly great ones.

The greatness of that wisdom which cometh from God, is invisible to the worldly, and to men of talents. Here are three orders of quite different kinds.

Great geniuses have their empire, their splendour, their greatness, their victories, and do not stand in need of carnal greatness, which has no relation to that which they seek. They are to be seen with the mind, and not with the eye; but that is enough for them.

Saints likewise have their empire, their splendour, their greatness, and their victories; and have no need either of carnal or mental greatness, which are not of their order, and neither increase nor diminish the greatness to which they aspire. They are seen of God and of angels, and not with the eye of the

body, nor by curious minds, and God is sufficient for them.

Archimedes would have been held in the same estimation, without any splendour of birth. He fought no battles; but he has left to all the world his admirable inventions. Oh! how great and illustrious does he appear to the eyes of the mind!

Jesus Christ, without riches, without any external display of science, stands in his own order, that of holiness. He neither published inventions, nor reigned over kingdoms; but he was humble, patient, pure before God, terrible to devils, and altogether without sin. Oh! with what illustrious pomp, with what transcendant magnificence did he come to such as see with the eyes of the heart, and are the discerners of true wisdom!

It would have been useless for Archimedes to have acted the prince, in his book of geometry, although he really was one.

It would have been useless for our Lord Jesus Christ to have come as an earthly king, in order that he might shine in his kingdom of holiness. But how consistently did he come with the character of his own order!

It is ridiculous to be scandalized at the mean condition of Jesus Christ, as if that meanness stood in the same order with the greatness which he came to display. Let us contemplate this greatness in his life, in his sufferings, in his obscurity, in his death, in the choice of his attendants, in their forsaking him, in his secret resurrection, and in all the other parts of his history; and we shall see it to be so great, as to leave no ground for being offended at his meanness, for there was no meanness in him.

But there are some who can admire no greatness but that of this world, as if there was none in understanding; and others admire only that of the understanding, as if there was not a greatness infinitely *more* sublime in heavenly wisdom.

The whole system of bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth, and the kingdoms of it, are inferior in value to the meanest of spirits; because a spirit is capable of knowing all this, and itself also, which body is not. And the whole system of bodies and spirits together, is unequal to the least motion of charity; for it is of an order infinitely more exalted.

From all bodies together, we could not extract a single thought; it is impossible, for thought is quite of a different order. Again, all bodies and spirits together are unable to produce one movement of real charity. This is likewise impossible, for charity is of another order, entirely supernatural.

Jesus Christ lived in so much obscurity (as the world terms obscurity,) that historians who record only things of importance, have scarcely taken any notice of him.

Yet what man ever possessed so much glory as Jesus Christ? The whole Jewish nation predicted him before his coming; the Gentile world adore him since his coming. Both Jews and Gentiles regard him as their centre. And yet who ever enjoyed so little of so much glory? Of thirty-three years, he spent thirty in privacy. During the other three he passed for an impostor, the priests and rulers of his nation rejected him, his friends and his kinsmen despised him; and, at last, he died an ignominious death, betrayed by one of his attendants, denied by another, and deserted by all.

What share then had he in this glory? No man had ever so much, and yet no man was ever in a meaner condition. All his glory was therefore for our sakes, to render him evident to us; but was not intended to aggrandize himself.

Jesus Christ speaks of the sublimest subjects in a manner as simple as if he had never considered them, but nevertheless his expressions are so exact, as to shew that he had thoroughly weighed them. Such accuracy with such simplicity is admirable.

Who made the evangelists acquainted with the qualities of a soul truly heroic, that they should paint it so perfectly as they have done in Jesus Christ? Why do they describe him as weak in his agony? Did they not know how to describe a courageous death? Yes, certainly; for St. Luke describes that of St. Stephen more forcibly in this respect, than he has done that of our Lord. They therefore represent him as capable of fear before his death actually arrived, but as dauntless afterward when it came. When he is described as afflicted, his affliction is from himself; but when troubled by men, he is unmoved.

The church has been obliged to prove that Christ was man, against those who have denied it, as well as to prove that he was God; for appearances were as much against the one as against the other.

Jesus Christ is a God to whom we approach without pride, and before whom we are humbled without despair.

The conversion of the heathen was reserved for the grace of the Messiah. The Jews either did not attempt it, or their attempts were unsuccessful. All that the prophets and Solomon had said on the subject was unavailing. Their wise men, as Plato and Socrates, could not persuade them to worship the true God alone.

The gospel says nothing of the early life of the Virgin Mary, but what relates to the birth of Jesus Christ, that every thing might bear reference to him.

Both Testaments refer to Jesus Christ, the former as its hope; the latter as its example; and both as their centre.

The prophets had the gift of foretelling; but never were foretold themselves; the saints, which followed were foretold, but had not the power of foretelling; Jesus Christ both prophesied, and was prophesied of.

Jesus Christ for all mankind; Moses for a single *nation.*

The Jews were blessed in Abraham: "I will bless them that bless thee," Gen. xii. 2. But all nations are blessed in Abraham's seed; "A light to lighten the Gentiles," &c. Luke ii. 32. "He has not done so to any nation," says David, speaking of the law, Psalm cxlvii. 20. 'He has done so to all nations,' may we say, speaking of Jesus Christ.

Thus it is the prerogative of Jesus Christ to be an universal blessing. The church offers sacrifice only for believers; Jesus Christ offered that of the cross for all.

Let us then stretch out our arms to our deliverer; who, having been promised four thousand years, came at length to suffer and to die for us, at the time, and under all the circumstances that were foretold; and waiting by his grace to die in peace, in the hope of being eternally united to him, let us in the meanwhile live with comfort; both among the good things which it may please him to give us, and among the evil things which he may send us for our good, and which, by his own example, he has taught us to endure.

CHAPTER XV.

THE EVIDENCES OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE PROPHECIES.

THE most striking evidences of Jesus Christ are the prophecies; and therefore God has ordered them with peculiar care. For the full accomplishment of them is a miracle which extends from the beginning of the church to the end. Sixteen hundred years together God raised up a succession of prophets; and in the four hundred years following, he dispersed their prophecies along with the Jews, who carried them into all parts of the world. Such was the preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ! As his gospel was to be believed by all nations, it was necessary, not only that there should be prophecies to gain it this belief, but likewise that they should be diffused through all the world, that all the world might receive him.

If only one single man had left a book of predictions concerning Jesus Christ, as to the time and manner of his coming, and he had come agreeably to those predictions, it would have infinite weight. But here is much more. Here is a succession of men, for four thousand years, who regularly, and without variation, succeed one another to foretel the same event. A whole people are his harbingers; and they subsist four thousand years, to testify in a *body, the* assurances they have respecting him, from

which no threats or persecutions could oblige them to depart. This is in every view remarkable.

The exact time was pointed out in the predictions by the state of the Jews, by that of the heathen world, by that of the temples, and by the number of years.

The prophets having given various signs which were all to concur at the coming of the Messiah, it was necessary they should all meet at the same period. Thus it was necessary that the fourth monarchy should be established at the expiration of Daniel's seventy weeks; that the sceptre should then be taken from Judah, and then that the Messiah should appear. And at that juncture Jesus Christ appeared, and declared himself to be the Messiah.

It is foretold, that under the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, before the dominion of the Jews was taken away, and in the seventieth of Daniel's weeks, the heathens should be instructed, and brought to the knowledge of the God who was adored by the Jews; that those who loved him should be delivered from their enemies, and be filled with his fear and love.

And it happened that in the time of the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, &c. the Pagans in multitudes adored the true God, and led an angelic life; women consecrated to religion their virginity, and their lives; men voluntarily renounced all the pleasures of sense. That which Plato was unable to persuade a few of the wisest and best informed men of his time to do, a secret power, by means of a few words, now effected in thousands of uneducated men.

What can all this mean? It is that which was foretold many ages before. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii. 28. All nations lay in infidelity and lust. All the world now becomes burning with charity; princes renounce their grandeur; even young women suffer martyrdom; chil-

dren forsake the houses of their parents to go and live in deserts. Whence springs this courage? The Messiah is come; behold the effects and the tokens of his coming.

For two thousand years together the God of the Jews remained unknown to an infinite multitude of Pagan nations. Yet, at the precise time foretold, the Pagans throng to adore this only true God; the idol temples are destroyed; kings submit themselves to the cross. What is the cause of all this? It is the Spirit of God poured out upon the earth.

It was foretold that the Messiah should come to establish a new covenant with his people, which would make them forget their departure out of Egypt, Jer. xxiii. 7. That he would write his law, not on tables of stone, but on their hearts, Jer. xxxi. 33. and put his fear, which was till then displayed in external ceremonies, into their hearts likewise. Jer. xxxii. 40.

That the Jews should reject our Lord, and should themselves be rejected of God, the choice vine bringeth forth only wild grapes. Isa. v. 2—7. That the chosen people should prove disloyal, ungrateful, and incredulous. A rebellious and gainsaying people. Isa. lxv. 2. That God should strike them with blindness, and that, like blind men, they should stumble at noon-day. Deut. xxviii. 28, 29.

That the church should be small in its beginning, and should afterwards increase. Ezek. xvii. 22—24.

It was foretold that idolatry should then be overthrown; that this Messiah should cause the idols to fall, and bring men to the worship of the true God. Isa. ii. 18.

That the idol temples should be cast down, and that in all places of the world men should offer to God pure sacrifices, and not those of beasts. Mal. i. 11.

That he should teach men the perfect way.

That he should reign over Jews and Gentiles,

No person has ever appeared before, or since, who has taught any thing corresponding to these predictions.

After so many persons who predicted his coming, Jesus Christ came, and said, I am he, and this is the time I was to come. He came to teach men that they have no other enemies but themselves; that their passions have separated them from God; that he came to deliver them from these enemies, to give them his grace, in order to form out of all nations one holy church, into which he would bring both Jews and Gentiles; and that he would destroy the idolatry of the one and the superstition of the other.

What the prophets have foretold should come to pass, my apostles, said he, will shortly accomplish. The Jews are on the point of being rejected; Jerusalem shall soon be destroyed; the Gentiles will soon be brought to the knowledge of the true God, and my apostles shall be their instructors, after you have slain the son who is the heir of the vineyard.

And afterward his apostles said plainly to the Jews, The curse is now going to be executed upon you. And they declared to the Gentiles, that they were to be brought to the true knowledge of God.

To this all men are averse, through the natural influence of their concupiscence. Hence this king of Jews and Gentiles was oppressed by both, who conspired to take away his life. All that is great in the world, the learned, the wise, and the mighty, unite to oppose this rising religion. Some write against it, others condemn it, and others put to death its professors. But in spite of all these different oppositions, we see Jesus Christ in a very little time reigning over them all; destroying the Jewish worship in Jerusalem, which was the centre of it, and from which his church was first taken, and idol worship in Rome, which was the centre of it, and where his principal church was afterward established.

Persons of no education, or power, for such were

the apostles and primitive Christians, withstood all the powers of the earth; overcame kings, together with the learned and the wise, and subverted idolatry, though so firmly established in the world. And all this was brought to pass by the sole influence of that word which had foretold it.

The Jews, by putting to death Jesus Christ, that they might not acknowledge him to be the Messiah, gave him the final mark of actually being the Messiah. And by persisting to misjudge him, they became irrefragable witnesses of him: for by their slaying him, and continuing to disown him, the prophecies were fulfilled.

Who can do otherwise than recognise Jesus Christ by the number of particular circumstances which were predicted of him? For it was declared,

That he should have a forerunner. Mal. iii. 1.

That he should be born an infant. Isa. ix. 6.

That he should be born in the city of Bethlehem; that he should spring from the tribe of Judah, and the family of David; and that he should principally appear at Jerusalem. Mic. v. 2.

That he should blind the eyes of the wise and learned, and preach the gospel to the poor and despised; that he should open the eyes of the blind, restore health to the diseased, and give light to those who languished in darkness. Isa. v. 15. xxxv. 5. ix. 2.

That he should teach the perfect way, and be the instructor of the Gentiles. Isa. xlii. 6.

That he should be a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Isa. liii.

That he should be the chief and precious corner stone. Isa. xxviii. 26.

That he should, at the same time, be a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. Isa. viii. 14.

That the Jews should fall upon this rock. Isa. viii. 15.

That this stone should be rejected by the builders;

that God would make it the head of the corner, Ps. cxviii. 22. that it should grow into a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. Dan. ii. 35.

That thus he should be disowned, betrayed, sold, buffetted, derided, and afflicted by a thousand different methods; that they should give him gall to drink, should pierce his hands and his feet, should spit in his face, should kill him, and cast lots upon his vesture. Zech. xi. 12. Ps. lxix. 21. Ps. xxii. 16, 18.

That he should rise again the third day from the dead. Ps. xvi. 10. Hos. vi. 3.

That he should ascend into heaven, and sit at the right hand of God. Ps. cx. 1.

That kings should set themselves in arms against him. Ps. ii. 2.

That sitting at the right hand of the Father, he should triumph over all his enemies. Ps. cx. 1, 2.

That the kings of the earth and all the people should worship him. Isa. lx. 10.

That the Jews should subsist as a distinct people. Jer. xxxi. 36.

That they should wander about without princes, without sacrifices, without an altar, without prophets, looking for deliverance, and not finding it. Hos. iii. 4, &c.

The Messiah was himself to produce a numerous people, elect, sacred and peculiar; to guide, support, and lead them into a place of rest and of holiness; to make them holy unto God; to make them the temple of God; to reconcile them to God; to save them from his wrath; to rescue them from the tyranny of sin, which reigns so visibly over men; to give laws to this people; to engrave these laws in their hearts; to offer himself to God for them; to be made a sacrifice for them; to be at once the spotless sacrifice and the priest; he was to offer himself, his body, and his blood, and also to offer bread and wine to God. Jesus Christ has done all this.

It was foretold that he should come as a deliverer, who should bruise Satan's head, who should save his people from their sins; from all their sins. That there should be a new covenant, which should be eternal, and another priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec, which should be everlasting. That Jesus Christ should be powerful, mighty, and glorious, and yet so mean as not to be acknowledged; that he should not be taken for what he really was; that he should be rejected and slain; that the people who had denied him should be no more his people; that those who had been idolaters should receive him, and trust in him; that he should quit Zion to reign in the very centre of idolatrous worship; that notwithstanding all this, the Jews should ever continue; that he should arise out of Judah, when the sceptre was departed from them.

Let any man consider, that from the beginning of the world, either the expectation or the worship of the Messiah continued without interruption; that he was promised to the first man, immediately after his fall; that after him others declared that God had revealed to them, that a Redeemer should be born, who would save his people; that Abraham afterwards was raised up to say that this Redeemer should proceed from a son which he was to have; that Jacob declared, that out of his twelve children Judah was the one from which he should descend; that Moses and the prophets came after this, and predicted the time and manner of his coming; that they said their law was only a preparation for that of the Messiah; that until his was promulgated, theirs should subsist; that thus either theirs or his should always remain in the world; that it has actually so remained; and that at length Jesus Christ came under all the circumstances which were foretold. Surely this must appear astonishing.

But, it may be said, if all this was so clearly foretold to the Jews, how came they not to believe on

him? Or how is it they are not exterminated for having resisted so clear a revelation? I reply, that both were predicted, that they would not believe it, clear as it was, and also that they should not be exterminated. And nothing could be more glorious to the Messiah; for it was not sufficient for this to be foretold; but the prophecies were also preserved without the shadow of suspicion.

The prophets have interwoven particular prophecies with those which relate to the Messiah; that the prophecies concerning him might not be without proof, and that the particular prophecies might not be unedifying.

"We have no king but Cæsar," said the Jews, John xix. 15. Therefore Jesus Christ was the Messiah, since they had no king but a stranger, and chose to have no other.

Daniel's seventy weeks are rendered disputable, as to the time of their beginning, by the phraseology of the prophecy; and, as to their expiration, by the differences among chronologists. And yet all this variety amounts to no more than two hundred years.

The same prophecies which represent Jesus Christ as in poverty, represent him as the master of the world.

Those prophecies which express the time of our Lord's coming, only speak of him as the ruler of the Gentiles, and as a sufferer; not, as in the clouds, nor as a judge; and those which represent him in glory, and judging the nations, specify no particular period.

When the Scriptures speak of the Messiah as great and glorious, it is evident they refer to his judging the world, and not to his redeeming it.

CHAPTER XVI.

VARIOUS PROOFS OF JESUS CHRIST.

If we are not to give credit to the Apostles, we must suppose them either to be deceived or deceivers. But neither could have easily been the case. As to the first, it was impossible they should be mistaken in taking a man to be risen from the dead; as to the other, the supposition of their being impostors is extremely absurd. Let us only examine it at length. Let us imagine these twelve men meeting together after the death of Jesus Christ, and combining to fabricate a report of his resurrection. By this they must set all powers against them. The heart of man has a strange inclination to inconstancy and change, to be drawn aside by promises and rewards. Now should only one of them be influenced by all these allurements, or even by imprisonment, tortures, or death itself, they had all been undone. Pursue this supposition.

While Jesus Christ continued with them, he might have encouraged them; but afterward, if he did not really appear to them, who was it that made them proceed?

The style of the gospel is admirable in an infinite number of views; and in this amongst others, that it contains no invectives, on the part of the historians, against Judas or Pilate, nor against any of the enemies or the murderers of Jesus Christ.

Had this modesty of the evangelical historians

been affected, (along with many other characters of the same excellent temper,) and had they affected it only in order to be taken notice of; if they had not ventured to remark it themselves, they would not have failed to procure friends who should notice it to their advantage. But as they acted without any affectation, and from motives altogether disinterested, they never made any person observe it. Indeed, I do not know that it has been remarked to this day, which shows the simplicity of their whole conduct in the affair.

Jesus Christ performed miracles, and his apostles after him, and many were also wrought by the primitive Christians; because as the prophecies were not yet fully accomplished, and were to be accomplished by them, nothing but miracles would have been a sufficient evidence of their commission. It was foretold, that the Messiah should convert the Gentile nations. But how was this prophecy to be fulfilled, if the Gentiles were not converted; and how were they to be converted to the Messiah, without beholding this final effect of the prophecies that proved him? Till, therefore, he had died, and was risen again, and the Gentiles were converted, all was not fulfilled. So that miracles were necessary through the whole of this period. But there is now no necessity for any more to establish the truth of the Christian religion; for the prophecies which are accomplished remain a perpetual miracle.

The present condition of the Jews is also a striking evidence of our religion. It is astonishing to see this people subsisting during so long a course of years, and yet to see them always miserable; it being necessary as an evidence of Jesus Christ, both that they should subsist, to be his witnesses, and should be miserable, as his crucifiers. And though to subsist, and to be miserable, are in some respects contradictory, yet the Jews do subsist, notwithstanding their misery.

But were they not almost in the same con in the time of the captivity? No;—the scepti not interrupted by their captivity in Babylon cause their return was promised and foretold. lest they should imagine the sceptre to be de from Judah, when Nabuchodonosor carried aw people, they were before-hand assured, that should only remain there for a short period should certainly be brought back. They were a consoled by the prophets, and their kings wer tinued. But the second destruction is witho promise of restoration; without prophets, wi kings, without comfort, without hope; the scep now departed from them for ever.

It was scarcely to be considered as being state of captivity, to be in it with an assu of deliverance in seventy years. But they are without any such hope.

God had promised them, that though they sl be scattered to the very extremities of the earth if they were faithful to his law, he would g them again. They are now faithful to it, an remain under oppression. It follows, therefore, the Messiah is come, and that the law which tained these promises has been annulled by establishment of another.

If the Jews had all been converted by Jesus C we should have none but suspected witnesses; had they been entirely destroyed, we should ha witnesses at all.

The Jews rejected Christ, but not all of them now saints receive him, and not those who are ca And this is so far from diminishing his glory, th gives the last touch which perfects it.

The argument which the Jews employ, and only one we find insisted on in their writings, in Talmud, and by the Rabbins, is, that Jesus C did not subdue the nations by force of arms. J *Christ*, say they, was killed, he was overcome

did not conquer the Gentiles by his power; he has not given us their spoils; he has not enriched us. And is this all they have to say? It is in this he appears so amiable to me. I would not have such a Messiah as they figure to themselves.

How delightful it is to behold with the eye of faith, Darius, Cyrus, Alexander, the Romans, Pompey, and Herod, all conspiring, without knowing it, to promote the glory of the gospel.

CHAPTER XVII.

AGAINST MAHOMET.

THE Mahometan religion has for its foundation the Alcoran and Mahomet. But this prophet, who was to be the last expectation of mankind, has he ever been foretold? Or, what token has he to show, more than any other man who may please to call himself a prophet? What miracles does he himself tell us that he wrought? What mysteries did he teach, even according to his own account? What morality? What felicity?

Mahomet is altogether without authority; his reasons, therefore, ought to be very cogent, as they are to rest entirely on their own force.

Suppose two persons should both talk of things apparently mean; but that the discourses of one should have a two-fold sense, understood by his own followers, while those of the other had but one meaning only. If a person who was not in the secret should hear them speak in this manner, he would be inclined to pass the same judgment on both. But if afterwards, in the remaining part of their conversation, the one should speak of angelical things, and the other should talk of nothing but what was base and vulgar, and even nonsensical, he must conclude, that the one spake mysteriously, and not the other; the one having shewn that he is incapable of absur*dity*, and capable of being mysterious; and the

other, that he is incapable of being mysterious, but is capable of being absurd.

It is not because there is something obscure in Mahomet's doctrine, that may pass for a mysterious meaning, that I would have it decided on; but by those things which are plain, as his paradise, and the like. In these he is ridiculous. But it is not so with the Scriptures. They have their obscurities; but then in other parts they are admirably clear; and their prophecies have been evidently accomplished. The case, therefore, is totally different. We are not to compare and confound things which resemble each other only in obscurity, and not in having plain and evident passages, which, when they are divine, are such as oblige us to reverence the obscurities themselves.

The Alcoran says, St. Matthew was a good man. Therefore Mahomet was a false prophet, either in calling wicked men good, or in disbelieving what these good men declared of Jesus Christ.

Any man can do what Mahomet did; for he wrought no miracle, his coming was never foretold. But what Jesus Christ has done, no other can do.

Mahomet established his kingdom by killing others —Jesus Christ by making his followers lay down their own lives: Mahomet by forbidding his law to be read—Jesus Christ by commanding us to read. In a word, the two were so opposite, that if Mahomet took the way, in human probability, to succeed; Jesus Christ took the way, humanly speaking, to be disappointed. And hence, instead of concluding, that because Mahomet succeeded, Jesus Christ might in like manner have succeeded; we ought to infer, that since Mahomet has succeeded, Christianity must have inevitably perished, if it had not been supported by a power altogether divine.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DESIGN OF GOD IN CONCEALING HIMSELF FRC SOME AND REVEALING HIMSELF TO OTHERS.

It was the purpose of God to redeem mankind, a to open the way of salvation to those who shou seek it. But men have rendered themselves unworthy of it, that he justly denies to some, account of their obduracy, that unmerited mer which he grants to others. If he thought fit to s mount the obstinacy of the most hardened, he cou easily effect it, by revealing himself so manifestly them, as to make it impossible for them to doubt t reality of his existence. And thus he will appear the last day, in awful thunder, and such a wreck nature, that the most blind will be forced to beh him.

But this was not the way in which he chose appear at his milder coming. Because, there bei so many among mankind who were rendering the selves unworthy of his compassion, he determined leave them destitute of a blessing which they d not desire. It was not therefore consistent that should appear in a manner manifestly divine, a capable of convincing all men irresistibly; nor, the other hand, would it have been right to hi been so perfectly concealed, as not to be discoverat by those who sought him sincerely. His design v *to* render himself perfectly knowable to the latt

and thus intending to reveal himself to those who sought him with their whole heart, and to conceal himself from those who shunned him with their whole heart, he so tempered the knowledge of himself, as to give marks that were visible to those who sought him, and obscure to those who sought him not.

There is light enough for those whose sincere desire is to see; and darkness enough for those who are of a contrary disposition.

There is brightness enough to illuminate the elect; and enough of obscurity to humble them.

There is obscurity enough to blind the reprobate; and brightness enough to condemn them, and leave them without excuse.

If the world subsisted merely to inform men of the being of God, his divinity would shine through it on every side in an undeniable manner. But as it subsists only by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, and to inform men of their corruption and redemption, every thing beams forth with evidence of these important facts. For all that we can behold neither denotes the total exclusion nor the manifest presence of God, but the presence of a God who hideth himself. Every thing bears this character.

If nothing of God had ever appeared, this continual privation would have been equivocal, and might have been equally explained by the non-existence of a Deity, and by the unworthiness of mankind to know any thing of him. But as he in some instances appears, though not continually, this takes away the ambiguity. If he has appeared once, he exists for ever. So that we can come to no other conclusion than this, that there is a God, and that men are unworthy to know him.

The divine intention is more to produce a perfection of the will than of the understanding; but a perfect clearness would be only of use to the understanding, and would be hurtful to the will.

If there were no darkness, men would not feel

their depravity; and were there no light, they would have no hope of a remedy. So that it is not only just, but advantageous to us, that God should conceal himself in part, and discover himself in part; since it is equally dangerous for men to know God without knowing their own misery, and to know their own misery without any knowledge of God.

Every thing informs man of his own condition; but this ought to be rightly understood. For God does not either completely reveal himself, nor remain altogether concealed. But it is most certainly true, that he conceals himself from those who tempt him, and reveals himself to those who seek him. For though men are altogether unworthy of God, yet at the same time they are capable of enjoying him. They are unworthy of communion with him by their corruption; but are capable of it by their original nature.

There is no object on earth, which does not proclaim either the misery of man, or the mercy of God; either the impotence of man without God, or the power of man with the assistance of God.

The whole universe teaches man either that he is depraved, or that he is redeemed. Every thing informs him either of his greatness or his misery. The dereliction of God, we may remark in the Pagans: his protection appears in the Jews.

All things work together for good to the elect; even the obscurities of scripture, which they revere on account of that divine clearness which they understand. And all things work together for evil to the reprobate, not excepting the divine clearness of scripture, which they blaspheme, on account of the obscurities which they do not comprehend.

If Jesus Christ had only come for the purpose of sanctification, the whole of scripture, and every thing else, would have been directed to this end; and it would have been very easy to convince unbelievers. But since he came, as Isaiah speaks, both

"for a sanctuary and a rock of offence, (Isa. viii. 14.) it is impossible for us to conquer their perverseness. But this makes nothing against us, because we affirm that all the divine conduct conveys no conviction to obstinate minds, and such as do not sincerely seek the truth.

Jesus Christ is come, "that those who see not, may see; and that those who see may be made blind." He is come to heal the sick, and let the healthy die: to "call sinners to repentance" and justification, and to leave those in their sins who think themselves righteous; to "fill the hungry with good things, and to send the rich empty away."

What do the prophets affirm of Jesus Christ? That he shall appear evidently to be God? No—But that he is a God veiled to the eye of sense; that he shall be unknown; that men will not think it is him; that he shall be "a stone of stumbling," against which "many shall fall," &c.

It was to make the Messiah known to the good, and unknown to the wicked, that God caused him to be so foretold. For had the manner of his appearance been clearly described, there would not have been any obscurity, even to wicked men. And if the time had been obscurely predicted, even good men would have felt themselves in darkness. For the integrity of their heart could not have taught them, for example, that a □ signified six hundred years. The time, therefore, was clearly declared; and the manner only in figure.

By this means the wicked, apprehending that the blessings promised were temporal, were deceived, notwithstanding the clear predictions of the time; while the righteous were not deceived; for the sense in which the promised blessings are understood, depends on the heart, which calls that good which it loves; but the interpretation of the promised time does not depend on the heart. And thus the clear prediction of the time, and the obscure predic-

tion of the blessings, could mislead none but the wicked.

What must the Messiah have been, seeing that in him the sceptre was eternally to continue with Judah; and that at his coming the sceptre was to be taken from Judah? "That seeing, they should not see; and understanding, they should not understand." Isa. vi. 9. Nothing could have been more complete.

Instead of complaining that God is concealed, we ought to give him thanks that he has so clearly revealed himself; and to give him thanks also, that he still hides himself from the wise and the proud, who are unworthy to know so holy a God.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, is intermixed with so many things of little consequence, that we can scarcely distinguish it. Had Moses kept no other register but that of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, it would have been too conspicuous; but even now, by careful inspection, we may trace it in Tamar, Ruth, &c.

The most apparent defects are of force with persons of discernment. For instance: the two genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke; it being manifest that they could not have been drawn out in concert.

Let not men, therefore, reproach us with want of light: for we ourselves profess to want it. But let them own the truth of religion in its very obscurity, in the imperfection of the light which surrounds us, and that indifference which is in men about knowing it.

Were there but one religion, God would be too conspicuous; and so likewise, if there were martyrs in no other religion than our own.

Jesus Christ, to leave the impious in their blindness, never told them that he was not of Nazareth, or that he was not the son of Joseph.

As Jesus Christ remained unknown amongst men, so truth remains amongst other opinions, undistin-

uished by their external appearance, like the Eucharist amidst common bread.

If the mercy of God be so great as savingly to instruct us, even while he hides himself from us, what light may we not expect, when he shall please to unveil his perfections?

We can understand nothing of the works of God, if we do not take it as a principle, that he blinds some while he illuminates others.

CHAPTER XIX.

THAT TRUE CHRISTIANS AND TRUE JEWS, HAVE BUT ONE AND THE SAME RELIGION.

THE Jewish religion seems essentially to consist in the paternity of Abraham, the rite of circumcision, the sacrifices, the ceremonies, the ark, the temple at Jerusalem, and, in short, in the law and the covenant of Moses.

I affirm, however, that it consisted in neither of these, but in the love of God alone; and that God rejected every thing without this.

That God bore no manner of regard to the carnal Israel who descended from Abraham.

That the Jews were to be punished by God like strangers, if they provoked his displeasure. "And it shall be, that if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods; I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish; as the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish." Deut. viii. 19, 20.

That strangers, if they loved God, should be accepted by him as the Jews.

That the true Jews would ascribe all their merit to God, and not to Abraham. "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer." Isaiah lxiii. 16.

Moses himself assured them that God was no

er of persons. "God, says he, regardeth not
s, nor taketh rewards." Deut. x. 17.
rm, that the circumcision enjoined was that of
art. "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your
and be no more stiffnecked. For the Lord
God is a great God, a mighty, and a terrible,
gardeth not persons," &c. Deut. x. 16, 17.
. 4.
: God promised to bestow on them this grace.
the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart,
e heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God
ll thy heart." Deut. xxx. 6.
: the uncircumcised in heart shall be judged
. "I will punish them which are circumcised
he uncircumcised; for all these nations are
mcised, and all the house of Israel are uncir-
ed in heart." Jer. ix. 25, 26.
l, that circumcision was a figure, instituted to
uish the Jews from all other nations. Gen.
0. And this was the reason that it was not
ned in the wilderness, because there was then
ger of their mixing with strangers; and since
Christ has come, it is no longer necessary.
: the love of God is every where enforced: "I
aven and earth to record this day against you,
have set before you life and death, blessing
rsing; therefore choose life, that both thou
y seed may live; that thou mayest love the
hy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice,
at thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy
Deut. xxx. 19, 20.
said, that the Jews for want of this love of
hould be rejected on account of their crimes,
e Gentiles admitted in their stead. "I will
y face from them, I will see what their end
e; for they are a very froward generation,
n in whom is no faith. They have moved me
ousy, with that which is not God, they have
ed me to anger with their vanities, and I will

move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." Deut. xxxii. 20, 21.

That temporal blessings are fallacious, and that the only true good is to be united to God. Psalm lxxiii. 27.

That their festivals and sacrifices were displeasing to God. Isaiah lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. Not only those of the wicked Jews, but he even took no pleasure in those of the good, as appears from the fiftieth Psalm, where, before the wicked are peculiarly addressed in those words, "to the wicked God saith," &c. verse 16, it is declared that God has no regard to the sacrifices or the blood of beasts.

That the offerings of the Gentiles should be accepted by God, and that he should withdraw his approbation from the offerings of the Jews. Mal. i. 11. Hos. vi. 6.

That God would make a new covenant by the Messiah, and that the old covenant should be disannulled. Jer. xxxi. 31.

That the old things should be forgotten. Isaiah xliii. 18.

That the ark should no more come to mind. Jer. iii. 16.

That the temple should be rejected. Jer. vii. 14.

That the sacrifices should be abolished, and purer sacrifices established. Mal. i. 10.

That the Aaronical order of priesthood should be set aside, and the order of Melchisedek introduced by the Messiah, and that this priesthood should be everlasting. Psalm cx. 4.

That Jerusalem should be cast off, and a new name given to the people, which should be more excellent than that of Jews, and of eternal duration. Isaiah vi. 11, 12; lvi. 3, 5.

That the Jews should be without prophets, without kings, without sacrifices, and without an altar; and should nevertheless subsist as a distinct people. *Hos. iii. 4.* Jer. xxxi. 37.

CHAPTER XX.

THAT GOD CANNOT BE SAVINGLY KNOWN BUT THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

ost of those who undertake to demonstrate the vine being to ungodly persons, commonly begin ith the works of nature, and they very rarely suc- ed. I do not mean to dispute the validity of these oofs, which are consecrated by the holy scripture; ey are conformable to reason; but very often they e not suited and proportioned to that disposition mind which prevails in those for whom they are tended.

For we must observe, that such discourses are not ldressed to men who have a lively faith in their arts, and who immediately discern that every thing hich exists is no more than the work of that God hom they adore. To these all nature proclaims its uthor, and the heavens declare the glory of God. ut as for those in whom this light is extinct, and in hom we endeavour to revive it, who are destitute faith and charity, and who behold nothing but arkness and obscurity in nature, it does not seem ie proper way to convert them, to point out to them s proofs on this important subject, nothing more an the course of the moon, or the planets, or com- on arguments, against which they have constantly ardened themselves. The obduracy of their minds nders them deaf to this voice of nature, which has

sounded continually in their ears; and experience shews, that so far from convincing them by this method, nothing is so likely to discourage them, and to make them despair of ever finding the truth, as to undertake to persuade them by this mode of reasoning, and to tell them that they must clearly see the truth of it.

It is not in this manner the scripture speaks, which knows so much better than we do the things which are of God. It informs us, indeed, that the beauty of the creatures makes known him who is their Author; but it does not tell us that it does this to all persons in the world. On the contrary, it declares that whenever they do it, it is not by themselves, but by that light which God sheds abroad into the hearts of those to whom he discovers himself by their means. "That which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it to them." Rom. i. 19. It teaches us, in general, that God is an invisible God. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." Isaiah xlv. 15. And that since the corruption of human nature, he has left men in a state of blindness, from which they can only be delivered by Jesus Christ, without whom we are cut off from all communion with God. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. xi. 27.

The scripture also points this out to us, when it tells us in so many places, that those who seek God find him; for we do not speak thus of a thing which is evident and clear; men do not search after that—it discovers itself, and compels observation.

The metaphysical proofs of a God are so very intricate, and abstracted from the common reasonings of men, that they strike them with but little force, and when they do affect some, it is only for the moment in which they discern the demonstration; but the very next hour they suspect they are deceived: *Quod curiositate cognoverant superbia amiserunt.*

Moreover, arguments of this kind can only lead us to a speculative knowledge of God; and to know him only thus, is, in fact, not to know him at all.

The Deity of Christians is not merely a God who is the author of geometrical truths, and of the order of the elements; that is the divinity of the Pagans. Nor is he merely a God who over-rules by his providence the lives and fortunes of men, in order to give those who worship him a happy series of years; this is the portion of the Jews. But the God of Abraham and of Jacob, the God of the Christians, is a God of love and consolation; a God who fills the soul and the heart which he possesses; gives it an inward feeling of its own misery, and of his infinite mercy; unites himself to the soul, replenishing it with humility and joy, with confidence and love; and renders it incapable of fixing on any thing but himself, as its ultimate object.

The God of the Christians is a God who makes the soul perceive that he is its only good; that its only rest is in him; that it can have no joy but in his love; and at the same time he causes it to abhor those obstacles, which hinder and withhold it from loving him with all its strength. Self-love and concupiscence, which do this, are insupportable to it. God makes it feel that there is this self-love deeply rooted within it, and that he alone can remove it.

This it is to know God as a Christian. But to know him in this manner, we must, at the same time, know our own misery and unworthiness, and the need we have of a mediator, in order to draw nigh to God, and unite ourselves to him. We must never separate these truths, because either by itself is not only unprofitable but hurtful. The knowledge of God, without the knowledge of our own misery, produces pride. The knowledge of our own misery, without the knowledge of Jesus Christ, produces despair. But the knowledge of Jesus Christ exempts us both from pride and despair; because in him we

see God, our own misery, and the only way of recovery from it.

We may know God without knowing our own miseries, or our own miseries without knowing God; or we may know both without knowing the means of deliverance from the miseries which oppress us. But we cannot know Jesus Christ without at the same time knowing God, our own miseries, and the remedy for them; because Jesus Christ is not only God, but he is God the healer of our miseries.

Thus all who seek God without Jesus Christ, find no light which can afford them satisfaction, or be really profitable to them. For either they do not go far enough to know that there is a God; or if they do, it is of no use to them, because they frame to themselves a way of communicating without a mediator, with that God whom they have discovered without a mediator; so that they either fall into atheism, or deism, two things which the Christian religion almost equally abhors.

We ought, therefore, wholly to direct our inquiries to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, since it is by him alone that we can hope to know God, in a manner that shall be really advantageous to us.

He is the true God to us men; that is, to miserable and sinful creatures; he is the centre of all, and the object of all. He who knows not him, knows nothing either in the order of the world, or in himself. For not only do we know nothing of God but by Jesus Christ, but we know nothing of ourselves also, but by Jesus Christ alone.

Without Jesus Christ man must remain in vice and in misery; with Jesus Christ man is released from vice, and from misery also. In him is all our happiness, our virtue, our life, our light, our hope; and out of him there is nothing but vice, misery, darkness, despair; nothing but confusion appears in the nature of God, or in the nature of man.

CHAPTER XXI.

IE SURPRISING CONTRARIETIES IN THE NATURE OF MAN, WITH REGARD TO TRUTH, HAPPINESS, AND VARIOUS OTHER THINGS.

OTHING is more astonishing in the nature of man, an the contrarieties which are observable in him, th regard to every subject. He is made for the owledge of truth; he ardently desires and pursues and yet when he endeavours to lay hold on it, he dazzles and confounds himself, that he makes it ubtful whether he has actually attained it. This ve rise to the two sects of Pyrrhonians and Dogtists; of which one endeavoured utterly to deive men of all knowledge of truth, while the other deavoured infallibly to assure him of it; but each th reasons so improbable, that they only increase r confusion and perplexity, as long as we continue thout any other light than that which we find in rselves.

The principal arguments of the Pyrrhonians, or eptics, are as follow. That we have no other rtainty of the truth of any principles (if we except ith and revelation) than that we naturally feel em within ourselves. But this natural perception them is no convincing evidence of their truth, cause, since without faith we have no assurance ether man was created by a good God, or by some il demon, whether he has existed from eternity,

or been the offspring of chance. It may be doubted whether these principles which have been given us are true, or false, or uncertain, this depending on the nature of our origin. Further, that no person can tell, except by faith, whether he is asleep or awake, because in our sleep we as strongly fancy ourselves to be awake as when we really are so; we imagine that we see space, figure, and motion; we perceive the time pass away; we calculate it; in short, we act as if we were awake. Therefore, as by our own confession, one half of our life is spent in sleep, during which, whatever we may suppose, we have no notion of truth, all our ideas being mere illusions, who can tell but the other half of our life, in which we think ourselves awake, is not also a sleep, a little different from the former, from which we awake when we think ourselves asleep, as we sometimes dream that we dream, heaping one reverie upon another.

I leave the declamations of the same sect against the impressions of custom, education, manners, countries, and other such things which govern the greatest part of mankind, who form their opinions on no other foundation.

The only fort of the Dogmatists is this, that, if we speak honestly and sincerely, no man can doubt of natural principles. We have a knowledge of truth, say they, not only by reasoning, but by intuition, and by a clear and vivid intelligence; and it is in this way that we attain our knowledge of first principles. It is, therefore, in vain for reason, which has no share in producing them, to attempt to attack them. The Sceptics, who make this their object, are labouring totally in vain. We know when we are awake, however unable we may be to demonstrate it by reasoning. This inability shews nothing more than the feebleness of our rational powers, but not the uncertainty of all our knowledge, as they pretend. For the knowledge of first

inciples, as for instance that there are such things space, time, motion, number, matter, is as certain any with which our reasonings furnish us. Nay, is upon this knowledge by perception and intui- n that reason must rest, and found all its proce- res. I perceive that there are three dimensions in ace, and that number is infinite; and my reason erward demonstrates, that there are no two square mbers assignable, one of which is exactly double other. We perceive principles, and we conclude positions; and both with equal certainty, though different ways. And it is as ridiculous for reason demand of perception and intelligence, a demon- ation of these first principles, before it consents to m, as it would be for the intellect to demand reason a clear intuition of the propositions it monstrates. This inability, therefore, can only ve to humble reason, which wants to be the judge every thing, but not at all to diminish our cer- nty, as if nothing but reason were capable of tructing us. Would to God that, on the contrary, had no occasion for it at all, and that we knew ery thing by instinct and intuition. But nature s denied us this favour, and allows us but little owledge of this sort; all the rest we must acquire reasoning.

Here then is open war among men. We must all list on one side or the other; for he that thinks to nd neuter is most effectually a Pyrrhonian; this utrality is the very essence of Pyrrhonism; he o is not against them, must be in a superlative nner for them. What shall a man do in this uation? Shall he doubt of every thing? Shall he ubt whether he is awake? whether another pinches n or burns him? Shall he doubt whether he ubts? Shall he doubt whether he exists? It ms impossible to come to this; and therefore I e it for granted, that there never was a complete d absolute sceptic. Nature sustains the weakness

of reason, and keeps it from this degree of extravagance; but shall a man say, on the contrary, that he is in sure possession of truth; he who, if you press him ever so little, can produce no title to belief, and is obliged to quit his hold?

Who shall unravel this perplexity? Nature confutes the Pyrrhonians; reason the Dogmatists. What then will become of thee, O man, who art seeking the knowledge of thine own condition, by thy natural reason? Thou canst neither avoid both these sects, nor continue in either.

Such is man, with regard to truth. Let us now consider him with respect to felicity, which he seeks with so much earnestness through the whole of his actions; for all men desire to be happy; this is a rule without exception. How different soever may be the means they employ, all have the same end in view. That which makes one man go to the wars, and that which makes another stay away, is the same desire, attended in each with different views. The will never stirs the least step but toward this object. It is the motive of all the actions of all men, not excepting even those who hang and destroy themselves.

And yet, after so many ages, no person without faith has ever arrived at this point, toward which all are continually tending. Every body is discontented; princes, subjects, nobles, beggars; the old, the young, the strong, the weak, the learned, the ignorant, the healthy, the sick, of all countries, of all times, of all ages, and of all conditions.

So long, so constant, and uniform a proof, ought fully to convince us of our own inability to arrive at happiness by our own endeavours. But example does not teach us; it is never so perfectly parallel as to be without some trifling difference, which leads us to expect that we shall not be deceived on the next occasion, as we were on the last. Thus the present never satisfying us, hope urges us on from

misfortune to misfortune, till at last it leads us to death, the sum of misery without end.

It is truly astonishing, that there should not be any one thing in nature which has not at some time been looked to, to fill the place of the last end and happiness of man; stars, elements, plants, animals, insects, diseases, wars, vices, crimes. Man being fallen from his natural state, there is nothing so extravagant as to be incapable of attracting him. Ever since he lost his real good, every thing cheats him with the appearance of it; not excepting even the destruction of himself, contrary as it is both to reason and nature together.

Some have sought for happiness in authority, others in curiosities and the sciences; and others in pleasure. These three passions have produced three sects; and those whom we call philosophers, have really done nothing else but follow one of the three. Such amongst them as approached nearest to the truth, considered, that the universal good which all men desire, and in which each should have a portion, could not consist in any peculiar thing which can be in the possession of one person alone, and which, if it were divided, would more grieve him who might possess it, for want of the part he has not, than it could gratify him by the enjoyment of the part which he has. They saw that the true good must be something which all may possess at once, without diminution or envy; and which no man can be deprived of against his will. They understood this, but they were unable to find it; and instead of solid and substantial good, they at last embraced the empty shadow of a chimerical virtue.

Our instinct makes us feel that we ought to seek our happiness within ourselves. Our passions hurry us abroad, even when no objects present themselves to excite them; and external objects are themselves our tempters, and attract us even when we are not thinking about them. Therefore, though philoso-

phers should weary themselves with crying, 'Enter into yourselves, your real felicity is within you,' people give them no credit; and those who do, are the more unsatisfied and ridiculous on that account; for what is there more vain and ridiculous, than that which the Stoics call happiness, or more false than the reasonings from which they deduce it!

They conclude, that what has been done once, may always be done; and that, because the desire of glory sometimes makes those who possess it, perform actions which are praiseworthy, others may also do the same. But those are feverish exertions, which health cannot imitate.

The internal contest between reason and the passions, has occasioned those who were desirous of peace to become divided into sects. Some were for renouncing their passions, and becoming Gods; and others for renouncing their reason, and becoming beasts. But neither of them could do either the one or the other. Reason still remains to censure the baseness and injustice of the passions, and to disturb the repose of those who give themselves up to them: and the passions still remain alive, even in those who pretend to renounce them.

This then is the account of what man can accomplish by himself and his own efforts, both with regard to truth and to happiness. We have an idea of truth, not to be effaced by the Sceptic; we have an incapacity of argument, not to be rectified by the Dogmatist. We wish for truth, and find nothing in ourselves but uncertainty. We seek after happiness, and find nothing but misery. We are incapable of ceasing to wish both for happiness and truth, and yet are incapable of procuring either certainty or felicity. This desire is left in us, partly as a punishment, and partly as an indication from whence we are fallen.

If man was not made for God, how is it that he can *only be* happy in God? and how is he so opposite to God!

n cannot tell where he is to place himself. He
questionably out of his way, and feels within
lf the remains of a happy state, from whence
fallen, and which he is unable to recover. He
r seeking after it with earnestness, but without
ss, encompassed with impenetrable darkness.
ıce arose the disputes of the philosophers;
taking upon them to elevate man, by displaying
eatness, and others to depress him, by repre-
ıg his misery. And what seems more strange,
at each party employed the argument of the
to strengthen his own opinion. For the misery
ın may be inferred from his greatness, and his
ıess may be inferred from his misery. Thus
ect more clearly demonstrated his misery, by
ıing it from his greatness; and another more
ly demonstrated his greatness, because they
ed it from his misery. Whatever one party
ɔed in proof of his greatness, served as an argu-
for the other to demonstrate his misery; be-
the greater the height from whence we have
, the greater is the calamity of having fallen,
ice-versa. So that each became uppermost by
, revolving in an endless circle of dispute: for
ertain, that the greater the degree of light men
, the more will they discern in man, both of
y and of greatness. In a word, man knows
ılf to be miserable; he is therefore miserable,
ıse he knows it; but he is likewise eminently
, because he is conscious of his misery.

hat a chimera then is man! What a novelty!
t a chaos! What a subject of contradiction!
lge of every thing, and yet a feeble worm of the
; the depository of truth, and yet a mere heap
ıcertainty; the glory and the outcast of the uni-
. If he boasts, I humble him; if he humbles
elf, I boast of him; and always contradict him,
e is brought to comprehend that he is an incom-
ınsible monster.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF MAN.

THE first thing which offers itself to man, when he reflects on himself, is his body: that is to say, a certain portion of matter, which is appropriated to him. But in order to understand what this is, he must compare it with all that is above him, or below him, in order to determine its just bounds.

Let him not therefore content himself with the sight of those objects which immediately surround him. Let him contemplate all nature, in its noble and perfect majesty. Let him consider that glorious luxuriancy, which is set as an eternal lamp to enlighten the universe. Let him consider that this earth is only a point, compared with the vast circuit which that luminary describes. And let him remark with astonishment, that this vast circuit itself is but a point, compared with that of the stars which revolve in the firmament. But if his sight be limited here, let his imagination go farther still. It will sooner be weary with conceiving, than nature with supplying his conceptions. All that we see of the universe, is no more than an imperceptible trait in the ample bosom of nature. No idea can reach the extent of her space. Let us swell our conceptions as much as we will, we bring forth nothing but atoms, in comparison with the reality of things. This is an infinite *sphere*, the centre of which is every where, and the

circumference no where. In a word, it is one of the greatest sensible characters of the omnipotence of God, that our imagination is lost in the thought.

When man returns again to himself, let him consider what he is, compared with the whole that exists. Let him look on himself as wandering in this bye-corner of nature; and from what he sees of this little dungeon, in which he is lodged, that is to say, this world, let him learn to estimate the earth, its kingdoms, its cities, and himself, at their proper value.

What is one man in this infinity of being? Who can perceive him? But to shew him another prodigy no less astonishing, let him look into what appears to him the minutest of objects. Let a mite, for instance, shew him in its little diminutive body, parts incomparably more minute; legs with joints, veins in those legs, blood in those veins, humours in that blood, drops in those humours, vapours in those drops. Let him divide these vapours till his powers and his conceptions are exhausted, and let the last particle which he has imagined, be the subject of our discourse. He will probably suppose, that this is the ultimate minutia in nature: but even in this I will shew him a new abyss. I will delineate to him not only the visible universe, but all that he is able to conceive in the immensity of nature, in the circumferenee of that imperceptible atom. Here let him behold an infinity of worlds, each with its firmament, its planets, its earth, in the same proportion as in the visible world, and on this earth other animals, and at length mites again, in which he shall also find what he found in the first, and others again in them, without end or cessation. Let him lose himself in these wonders, as surprising by their minuteness, as the former by their extent. And who will not be surprised to consider, that this body, which was just now imperceptible in the universe, which universe itself was imperceptible in the bosom

of universal being, should now become a colossus, a world, or rather a universe, compared with that ultimate minuteness, to which we can never arrive.

He that shall reflect on himself thus, will, no doubt, be affrighted to find himself, as it were suspended, as to the portion of matter allotted him, between the two abysses of infinity and nothing, from which he is equally removed. He will tremble at the sight of these wonders; and I think that his curiosity changing into admiration, he will be more inclined to contemplate them in silence, than to investigate them with presumption.

For, after all, what is man in nature? A nothing before infinity, an universe before nothing; a medium between the two. He is infinitely distant from both extremes, and his being is no less distant from that nothing from which he was taken, than from that infinity in which he is swallowed up.

His understanding holds the same rank in the order of intelligent beings, as his body in the material system; and all that it can do is only to discern some appearances of the middle of things, under perpetual despair of comprehending either their beginning or their end. All things have arisen from nothing, and are tending to infinity. Who can follow such an astonishing progress? None but the author of these wonders is able to comprehend them.

This middle state betwixt two extremes, is common to all our faculties. Our senses can bear nothing extreme; too loud a sound makes us deaf; too strong a light makes us blind; too great a distance, or too great nearness, alike prevent us from seeing; too much prolixity, or too much brevity, render a discourse obscure; too much pleasure incommodes us; too much uniformity of sounds disgusts us. We are not capable of feeling either the most intense heat, or the most extreme cold. Any qualities in excess are inimical to us, and not perceivable; we *do not feel*, we only *suffer* them. Childhood and old

e alike incapacitate the mind; too much or too tle food disturbs it in its actions; too much or too tle instruction renders it stupid. Things in ex- ime are to us as if they were not, and we are as thing with respect to them: either we escape them, they escape us.

This is our real condition. This confines all our tainments within certain limits, which we never ss; incapable both of knowing every thing, and being ignorant of every thing. We are placed on wide medium, always uncertain, and floating be- een ignorance and knowledge; and if we endea- ur to go farther, the object we have in view grows steady, escapes our hold, hides itself from us, and nishes in an eternal flight, which nothing can strain.

This is our natural condition, and yet that which the most opposite to our inclination. We burn th a desire to search into every thing, and to build tower which shall reach to infinity; but soon the ole edifice crumbles to pieces, and the earth ens, and swallows it up.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GREATNESS OF MAN.

I CAN easily conceive a man without hands, and without feet; and I could conceive him too without an head, if I did not learn from experience, that it is by means of this he thinks. Thought, therefore, constitutes the essence of man, without which we can have no conception of him.

What is that in us which is sensible of pleasure? Is it the hand! Is it the arm? Is it the flesh? Is it the blood?—We shall find that it must be something immaterial.

Man is so great, that his greatness appears in his knowing himself to be miserable. A tree is not conscious of misery. It is true, that to know oneself to be miserable, is really to be miserable; but there is still something great in a consciousness of misery. Thus all his miseries prove his greatness. They are the miseries of a noble lord, the miseries of a king that has been dethroned.

Who thinks himself unhappy in not being a king, except a deposed king? Was Paulus Æmilius unhappy in not being consul any longer? On the contrary, every body perceived he was happy in having gone through that office, because it was not a condition in which he was always to remain. But *Perseus* was so extremely miserable in not being

nger a king, because he ought always to have con-
nued so, that it was thought strange he could bear
ren to live. Who thinks himself unhappy in having
at one mouth? Who would not reckon himself
nfortunate in having but one eye? No man, per-
aps, ever thought of lamenting that he had not
iree eyes; but any man would be inconsolable for
ie loss of one.

We have so great an idea of the human soul, that
'e cannot bear to be despised by it, or to be without
:s esteem. All the happiness of mankind consists
a this esteem.

If, on the one hand the false glory which men
ursue is a strong proof of their misery, and their
eanness, it is, on the other hand, an equal proof
f their excellence. For whatever earthly posses-
ions men have, whatever health, and accommoda-
ions they enjoy, they are still dissatisfied, if other
nen do not esteem them. They set so high a value
n the reason of man, that whatever worldly advan-
ages they possess, they think themselves unhappy
f they do not stand to advantage in the judgment of
thers. This is the best situation a man can hold.
Nothing can prevent him from desiring it; and this
s the most indelible character of the heart of man;
nsomuch that those who think most contemptuously
f mankind, and level them with the beasts, would
ven be admired for so doing, and thus contradict
hemselves by their own desires. Nature, which is
tronger than all their reason, convincing them more
orcibly of the greatness of man, than reason can do
f his meanness.

Man is but a reed, and the weakest in nature; but
hen he is a thinking reed. There is no occasion
hat the whole universe should arm itself to destroy
im; a vapour, a drop of water is sufficient to kill
im. But should the whole universe conspire to
rush him, he would still be more noble than that
which destroys him, because he knows that he dies,

while the universe would be insensible of its victory over him.

Thus the whole of our dignity consists in thought. It is by this we are to elevate ourselves, and not by mere space and duration. Let us then labour to *think well:* this is the principle of morality.

It is dangerous to shew man how much he resembles the beasts, without shewing him his greatness. It is dangerous to shew him his excellence, without shewing him his meanness. And the greatest danger of all is, to leave him ignorant of both. But it is highly beneficial to him to have a knowledge of both.

Let man then set a just value on himself. Let him love himself, because he has in him a nature capable of good; but let him not on that account love the weaknesses of that nature. Let him despise himself, because his capacity is unfilled; but let him not on that account despise his natural capacity. Let him hate himself; let him love himself. He possesses a capacity for the knowledge of the truth, and for happiness, but he is not in possession of any truth that is permanent or satisfactory. I would therefore lead him to desire to find it, to be ready and disengaged from his passions, that he may follow it wherever he may meet with it. And knowing how much his knowledge is obscured by his passions, I would have him hate in himself that concupiscence, which so biasses his judgment; that it may neither blind him in making his choice, nor divert him from it after it is made.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VANITY OF MAN.

e not satisfied with the life we have in our-
and in our own being; we wish to live an
ary life in the idea of others; and hence we
o make some appearance. We labour inces-
o embellish and retain this fictitious being,
re neglect the real one. And if we possess
ranquillity, or generosity, or fidelity, we are
s to make it known, that we may attach these
to this being of the imagination. We would
prive ourselves of them, for the sake of being
to possess them, and willingly turn cowards,
the reputation of being valiant. A strong
ais of the nullity of our proper being, that we
be satisfied in it, without the other, and very
nounce it for the other; for he that would
to preserve his honour, becomes infamous on
count.
charm of glory is so great, that join it to
er you will, even to death itself, it appears

e is a counterpoise to all our miseries; because
r conceals them, or, if it exposes them, it
in the discovery.
e has so natural a possession of us, amidst all
eries and errors, that men lose even life with
they know it will be talked of.

Vanity has so rooted itself in the heart of man, that a scullion, a hodman, a porter, will vaunt of himself, and wants to have his admirers. And philosophers themselves want the same. Those who write against glory would have the glory of having written well against it; and those who read their compositions, would have the glory of having read them. And I who am writing this perhaps feel the same wish; and perhaps those who read what I write, will feel it likewise.

Notwithstanding a sight of all the miseries which touch us, and seize us, as it were by the throat, we have still an insuperable instinct which lifts us up.

We are so presumptuous that we desire to be known to all the world, and even to those who shall come after us, when we are no more; and we are so vain, that the esteem of five or six persons who are round about us, is enough to amuse and content us.

The most important thing in life is the choice of a profession; and yet this is left to mere chance. Custom makes masons, soldiers, upholsterers, &c. He is an excellent upholsterer, says one: and, oh! what fools are the soldiers, says another! Others, on the contrary, cry out, there is nothing so great as the wars; and all men are poor creatures but soldiers. By merely hearing in our infancy some arts commended, and others despised, we determine our choice; for we naturally love excellence, and hate imprudence. These words affect us, and we only err in applying them. So great is the power of custom, that there are whole countries which consist of mechanics, and others of soldiers. Nature can never be thus uniform. It is custom, therefore, which does this, and carries nature along with it. Yet sometimes again nature will prevail, and keep men under its instinct, in spite of all custom, either good or bad.

Curiosity is nothing but vanity. For the most *part*, we desire to know things merely that we may

c of them. A man would not undertake a voyage sea, for the bare pleasure of gratifying his sight, ıe was never to speak of it, and had no hope of ıversing about it afterward.

We do not much care about being esteemed in ms which we only pass through, but when we are ng to stay in them any time, we are solicitous for How much time will this take? A time proporned to our vain and transitory stay?

A little thing comforts us, because a little thing icts us.

We are never satisfied with the present. We icipate the future as too slow, and, as it were, to sten it on; or we recall the time past, as too swift, order to stop its flight. We are so imprudent, ıt we ramble through those times with which we ve nothing to do, and utterly forget that which ne is our own; and so vain, that we dream of se which are not, and let the only one which sists, pass away without reflection. This is beıse the present generally gives us some uneasiness; hide it from our sight, because it distresses us; l if it happen to be agreeable, we are distressed see it so quickly pass away. We endeavour to ain it by means of the future, and think about posing of things which are not in our power, for a ıe to which we have no assurance whatever that shall ever arrive.

Let a man examine his own thoughts, and he will ways find them employed about the time past or to ne. We scarcely bestow a thought upon the preıt; or, if we do, it is only that we may borrow ht from it to dispose of the future. The present is ver in our view; the past and the present are our ans, but the future alone is our object. Thus we ver live, but we hope to live; and being thus ever paring to be happy, it is most certain we never ll be so, if we do not aspire to some other felicity n can ever be enjoyed in this life.

Our imagination so magnifies the time present, by reflecting perpetually on it, and so weakens the idea of eternity, by scarcely ever thinking about it, that we make a nothing of eternity, and an eternity of nothing. And the root of all this is so predominant in us, that all our reason is too weak to surmount it.

Cromwell was going to desolate all Christendom; the royal family would have been ruined, and his own have been established in power, but for a little particle of gravel which fell down into his ureter. Rome itself began to tremble under him; but this petty grain, which had been nothing anywhere else, coming into this part, occasioned his death, the fall of his family, and the restoration of the king.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WEAKNESS OF MAN.

THERE is nothing which astonishes me so much as to see that all the world are not astonished at their own weakness. Men act seriously, and every one follows his own course of life, not because it is really good to follow it, or that it is the fashion, but as if each man knew exactly what is reason and justice.

We find ourselves deceived every moment, and by a pleasant kind of humility we think the fault is in ourselves, and not in the art which we always boast of understanding. It is fit there should be many such persons in the world, to shew that man is capable of the most extravagant opinions, since he is capable of believing that the weakness he feels is not natural and inevitable, but that on the contrary he is naturally wise.

The weakness of human reason appears much more in those who are ignorant of it, than in those who are acquainted with it.

While we are too young we judge amiss, and when we are too old we do the same. If we think too little of a thing, or too much, we turn giddy, and are unable to discover the truth.

If a man views his own work just after he has finished it, he is quite prepossessed in its favour; but

if he waits too long, he scarcely enters into the subject of it.

There is but one precise point from which we can take a just view of a picture; the rest are too near or too distant, too high or too low. Perspective assigns this point in the art of painting; but who is able to determine it in truth and in morals?

That mistress of mistake, which we call fancy or opinion, is so much the greater cheat, because she does not cheat constantly. She would be an infallible rule of truth, if she were an infallible rule of falsehood. But as she most commonly deceives us, she gives us no mark by which we can go, but stamps truth and falsehood with the same impression.

This proud princess, the enemy of reason, who is so well pleased to controul and rule over her, in order to shew how much she can govern every thing, has established in man a second nature. She has her happy and her unhappy, her sick and her healthy, her rich and her poor, her fools and her wise; and nothing is so vexatious as to see that she fills her votaries with more complete and entire satisfaction than reason can do. The imaginary wise always feeling quite a different degree of pleasure to any which the truly wise can reasonably enjoy. They look on other people with authority; they dispute with assurance and confidence, while the others feel modest and diffident. And their gaiety of countenance often gives them an advantage in the opinion of their hearers; so much favour do the imaginary wise find with judges of their own description. Opinion cannot, indeed, make fools wise, but it makes them contented, and so maintains the contest with reason, which can only render its friends miserable. The one covers them with glory, the other with shame.

What dispenses reputation, what procures respect and veneration to persons, to books, to the great, but

ıion? How insufficient are all riches in the world ıout its concurrence?

pinion disposes of every thing. It denominates ıty, justice, and happiness, which are all the ld can afford. I should be very glad to see an ian book, of which I know only the title, which self worth a multitude of books. *Della Opinione ına del Mundo:* Of Opinion, the Queen of the rld. I subscribe to this without knowing it, if e be no evil cloaked under this title.

here is scarcely any thing, just or unjust, which s not change its nature, on changing its climate. ee degrees of elevation in the pole overturn all sprudence. The meridian determines a truth, a few years a right to possession. Fundamental s vary. Right has its dates. Fine justice this, ch is bounded by a river or a mountain; truth one side of the Pyrenees is falsehood on the er.

he art of overturning states is to discredit esta- ıhed customs, by looking into their origin, and nting out that it was defective in authority and tice. We ought, say you, to go back to the pri- ive and fundamental laws of the state, which ust customs have abolished. This is the sure way verset every thing. Nothing is right in such a ance; yet the multitude lend an ear to such dis- ırses; they shake off the yoke as soon as ever y begin to feel it, and the great take advantage t, to ruin both them and these curious examiners established customs. But by a contrary fault, n think they may do with justice whatever is not hout example.

Set the greatest philosopher in the world upon a nk, only a little broader than the space he usually es up in walking, if there be a precipice under- ıth, although his reason may convince him he is e, his imagination will get the better of him. ne could not even bear the thought, without

sweating and turning pale. I will not enumerate all the effects such a situation might produce. Every one knows the sight of a cat, or of a rat, or treading upon a coal, will entirely unhinge the reason of some people.

Would you not say that yon magistrate, whose venerable age commands the respect of the whole nation, governs himself by wisdom pure and sublime; that he judges of things by their real nature, without being moved by those trifling circumstances which only influence the imagination of the weak! Behold him enter the court where he is to administer justice; see him prepare, with exemplary gravity, for a hearing—Let a counsel come in, to whom nature has given an untunable voice, or a comical face, if his barber has but half shaved him, or if some accident has well splashed him, I dare lay a wager the magistrate loses his gravity.

The soul of the greatest man living is not so independent but it is liable to be disturbed by the least bustling about him. You need not let off a cannon to break the train of his thought; the noise of a weather-cock, or of a pully, will do it. Do not be surprised if you hear him argue a little incoherently at present; he has a fly buzzing at his ears, and that is enough to make him deaf to good counsel. If you would have him informed of the truth, you must drive away this animal, which holds his reason in check, and discomposes that wonderful intellect which governs cities and kingdoms.

The will is one of the principal instruments of belief, not that it produces belief, but because things appear either true or false, according to the light in which we view them. The will, which likes one point of view better than another, turns off the mind from considering those qualities which it dislikes, and thus the understanding, keeping pace with the will, it stops to look on the appearance that pleases it, and judging by what it sees,

insensibly regulates its belief by the inclination the will.

Diseases are another source of error. They impair r judgment and our senses. And if violent ones ›duce a sensible alteration in them, I have no ubt but lesser ones have a proportional effect.

Self-interest is also a wonderful instrument for reeably putting out our eyes. Affection or dislike ll overturn justice. How well does a counsellor, ained with a large fee, find the justice of the use he is defending improve! Yet I have known n, who through a contrary fantasticalness of mind, ve, in order to avoid falling into this self-love, en guilty of the highest injustice in the other treme. The sure way to lose a cause the most st in itself, was to get it recommended to them by me of their nearest relations.

Imagination often magnifies the most trifling ob-›ts, by giving them such a chimerical value, that r minds are completely filled by them; and by an solent temerity, it diminishes the greatest, to make em come within our measure.

Truth and justice are two points so very fine, that r instruments are too dull to touch them with. actness. If they reach them, they either slip over e point, or get all on one side of it, more near to e wrong than the right.

It is not merely old impressions that are capable misleading us. The charms of novelty have e same power; and hence arise all the disputes ongst men, who charge each other either with llowing the false impressions they have received m their childhood, or with rashly running after w ones.

Who keeps the just medium? Let him come for-ard and prove it. There is no principle, how na-ral soever it may be, even from our infancy, but ay be made to pass for a false impression, either m education or of the senses. Because, says one,

you have thought from your infancy that a vessel was empty when you saw nothing in it, you have believed the possibility of a vacuum. This is only a strong illusion of your senses, strengthened by custom, which science will correct. While others say, on the other hand, because they have told you in the schools, that there is no such thing as a vacuum, they have vitiated your common sense, which easily admitted it before they made this evil impression, which you must therefore correct, by returning to the dictates of nature. Which then has deceived us, our senses or our education?

The whole employment of men is to get property; and yet the title by which they hold it, has nothing for its origin, but the fancy of the legislature. But after all they have no power to keep possession of it in security; a thousand accidents may deprive them of it. It is the same with knowledge; a fit of sickness may deprive us of it,

Man, therefore, is nothing but the subject of indelible errors, without grace. Nothing shows him the truth, every thing misleads him. The two criterions of truth, reason, and the senses, beside being often unfaithful, impose mutually upon each other. Our senses mislead our reason by false appearances, and reason plays them the same trick in return, and revenges itself upon them. The passions of the mind discompose the senses, and leave bad impressions upon them. They lie, and impose on each other.

What are our natural principles but principles we are used to? In children, those they have received from the customs of their parents, in the same way that animals learn to run after one another.

A different custom produces different natural principles. This is proved by experience. And if there are some principles of nature indelible by custom, there are likewise some impressions of custom *indelible* by nature. This depends on disposition.

Parents are fearful lest the natural affection of their children should be effaced; what a nature then is this which is liable to be effaced? Custom is a second nature, which eradicates the first. Why then is not custom called natural? I much fear that this nature itself is only an original custom, as custom is a secondary nature.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MISERY OF MAN.

NOTHING is more capable of making us enter into the knowledge of human misery, than a consideration of the real cause of that perpetual agitation, in which men pass away all their lives.

The soul is sent into the body, to sojourn there a few days. She knows that this is only the passage to a voyage for eternity, and that she has only the short period that life endures to prepare herself for it. The necessities of nature take up the greatest part of this time; and but very little is left to be at her own disposal. And yet this little which remains, so greatly incommodes her, and so strangely perplexes her, that she only studies how to lose it. It is an intolerable burthen to her, to be obliged to live with herself, and think of herself. So that her whole care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious period pass away without reflection, by amusing herself with things that may prevent her from thinking of it.

This is the source of all the tumultuous occupations of men, and of all that is called diversion or pastime; in which their only aim in effect is, to make the time pass away without feeling it, or rather without feeling themselves; and, by wasting this small portion of life, to avoid that bitterness and inward disgust, which would necessarily accompany an

tention to ourselves for that period. The soul finds
)thing in herself that contents her. She sees no-
ing but what it distresses her to think of. And
is obliges her to look round about her, to seek how
ıe may lose the recollection of her real condition,
/ applying herself to external objects. Her pleasure
)nsists in this forgetfulness: and nothing is wanting
make her miserable, but obliging her to see herself,
ıd to live with herself.

Men are charged from their infancy with the care
their honour, of their property, and with the pro-
:rty and honour of their relations and friends. We
ırden them with the study of languages, of the
iences, of exercises, and of the arts. We load them
ith business, and persuade them they can never be
ıly happy except they do so and so, by their in-
ıstry and care, that their fortune, their honour, and
en the fortune and honour of their friends, may be
fe; and that the failure of either of these things
ill render them miserable. Thus we give them
ices and employments, and harass them from mor-
ng to night. A strange method, say you, of making
em happy! What more could be done to render
em miserable? Would you know what more might
: done? Nothing else but to release them from
ese cares. For then they would see themselves,
ıd think of themselves, and that they would find
supportable. Hence, if they gain any relaxation
ter all their toils, they toil again to throw away
eir time in some sort of diversion, which may oc-
py them wholly, and hide them from themselves.

For this reason, when I have set myself to consider
: various agitations of human life, the toil and the
nger to which men expose themselves at court, in
: camp, in the pursuit of their ambitious preten-
)ns, which give birth to so much quarrelling and
ssion, and to so many desperate and fatal adven-
:es, I have often said that all the misfortunes of
)n arise from their not knowing how to be at rest

in their closets. A person who has property enough to support him, if he did but know how to dwell with himself, would never go elsewhere for the sake of a voyage by sea, or the siege of a city; and if men had no other aim but simply to live, they would find no occasion for such hazardous employments.

I speak only of those who look at themselves, without any view of religion. For it is indeed one of the miracles of the Christian religion, that it reconciles man to himself, by reconciling him to God; that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and renders solitude and silence more agreeable to some persons, than all the bustle and commerce of mankind. But it is not by confining man to himself that it produces these wonderful effects; it is only by leading him to God, and by supporting him under the sense of his miseries, with the hope of another life, in which he will be freed from them for ever.

But as for those who are actuated only by the emotions they feel in themselves, and in their own nature, it is impossible they should continue in that leisure, which gives them an opportunity of considering and viewing themselves, without immediately falling into chagrin and distress. Man who loves nothing but himself, hates nothing so much as to be alone with himself. He seeks nothing but for himself, and yet flies from nothing so much as himself; because when he sees himself, he does not find himself such as he could wish, he only discovers a heap of inevitable miseries, and a void as to all real and solid good, which he is incapable to fill.

Let a man chuse what condition he will, and let him accumulate together all the goods and all the gratifications which appear capable of making any man content, yet if, notwithstanding all this, he is without employment and diversion, and has time to reflect on what he is, this languishing felicity will soon come to an end. He will of necessity fall into

ırmenting apprehensions of what is to come, and if e does not get something external to employ him, he navoidably becomes miserable.

But is not regal dignity of itself sufficiently great) render him who possesses it happy, by the mere iew of what he is? Is it necessary that a king hould be diverted from this, like the common ranks f mankind? I see clearly that you will make some ıen happy, by diverting them from the prospect f their domestic distresses, and making them apply ll their care to become excellent dancers. But shall re say this of a king? Will he be more happy by mploying himself in these trifling amusements, than n contemplating his own grandeur? What object nore satisfactory can you present to his mind? Is t not doing injustice to his joy, to employ his mind rith the care of adjusting his steps by the cadence f a song, or of ordering a ball with propriety, instead f leaving him to enjoy repose in the contemplation f the glory and splendour which surround him? ,et us make the experiment: let us leave a king all lone, without any sensual gratification, without any are upon his mind, without company, to think at eisure upon himself; and we shall soon find that a ing who has a sight of himself, is a man full of niseries, who feels them as much as any other. Therefore this is always carefully avoided, and there ıre always a great number of people kept about the ersons of kings, whose business it is to make diver- ions succeed after business, and to watch all their ıours of leisure, to supply them with pleasures and ports, that no time may be left vacant; that is to ay, they are surrounded by people, who take a won- lerful deal of care that the king shall not be alone, nd in a situation to think on himself, well knowing hat if he does this, all king as he is, he must be niserable.

The principal thing which supports men under reat employments, otherwise so full of trouble, is,

that they are incessantly called off from thinking of themselves.

Consider it well. What else is it for a man to be a superintendent, a chancellor, a prime-minister, but to have a number of people flocking to him from all quarters, so as not to leave him a single hour in the day, to think on himself? And when such men fall into disgrace, and are banished to their country seats, though they want neither fortune nor domestics, to minister to their wants, they do not fail to be unhappy; because no one now hinders them from thinking on themselves.

Whence comes it to pass, that so many men are delighted with gaming, or hunting, or other diversions, which employ their whole souls! Not because there is in fact any happiness in what may be acquired by the sport, or that they imagine there is any real blessedness to be found in the money which they may win, or in the hare which they chase; they would not even accept this if you were to offer it them. It is not those gentle and easy habits which leave us at leisure to think on our own wretched condition, that they want; but the hurry which diverts us from thinking.

Hence it is that men are so much in love with the noise and tumult of the world; that a prison is a punishment so horrible, and that there are so few persons who can bear to be shut up in solitude.

This then is all that men have been able to invent, to render themselves happy. And those who amuse themselves with merely pointing out the vanity and meanness of the diversions which men follow, are indeed well acquainted with one part of their miseries; for a considerable part it is, to be able to take pleasure in things so base and contemptible. But they do not understand the principle which renders these miserable things even necessary to men, *so long* as they are uncured of that inward and natural *unhappiness*, of not being able to bear the sight

of themselves. If a man were to buy a hare in the market, it would not protect him from this, but the chase of it may. And therefore when we tell men that what they seek with so much ardour is unable to satisfy them, that there is nothing more mean and more vain, if they answered as they would do if they thought on the subject, there would not be any difference between us; they would ingenuously declare, that they propose nothing in these pursuits but a violent and impetuous scene of action, which may keep them from the view of themselves, and that therefore they make choice of some pleasing objects, which may charm them, and take up all their thoughts. But they do not answer thus, because they are ignorant of themselves. A gentleman sincerely believes that there is somewhat great and noble in hunting; he will tell you it is a royal sport. And it is the same with any other thing about which the great number of men are taken up. They imagine that there must be somewhat real and solid in the objects themselves. When some persuade themselves that if they could but obtain such an office, they should afterwards repose themselves with pleasure; they are insensible of the insatiable nature of desire. They think they are seeking sincerely after rest, while in fact they are seeking after nothing but disquiet.

Men have one secret instinct, which prompts them to seek abroad for employment or recreation, and which proceeds from a sense of their continual unhappiness. And they have another secret instinct, a remain of the grandeur of their original nature, which makes them conscious that happiness in effect consists only in repose. And from these two opposite instincts, they form a confused design, which is hidden even from themselves in the recesses of the soul, which engages them to seek after repose by means of agitation, and constantly to imagine, that the satisfaction they have not will infallibly ensue, if by surmounting certain difficulties which they now

can discern, they may but open by that means the door to tranquillity.

Thus our life runs away. We seek rest, by encountering some impediments, and when we have removed them, rest itself becomes insupportable. For either we are ruminating on the miseries we feel, or on those which we fear. And even when we see ourselves on all sides under shelter, disquietude, though deprived of its authority, will yet infallibly shoot forth from the heart, where it is naturally rooted, and fill the mind with its poison.

Therefore, when Cineas said to Pyrrhus, who proposed to enjoy himself with his friends, after he should have conquered a good part of the world, that he would do better to take his happiness in advance, by beginning at once to enjoy ease, without going in quest of it through so much fatigue: he gave him advice, which was indeed full of difficulty, and which was scarcely more rational than the project of that ambitious young prince. Each of them supposed that a man could be satisfied with himself, and his present possessions, without filling up the void in his heart, by imaginary expectations; which is false. Pyrrhus could never have been happy, either before or after the conquest of the world; and perhaps that easy life which his minister recommended to him, was still less capable of giving him satisfaction, than the tumult of all the battles and voyages which he had planned in his mind.

We ought therefore to acknowledge, that man is really so miserable, that he would disquiet himself without any external cause of disquiet, by the mere state alone of his natural condition; and yet he is at the same time so trifling and vain, that while he is full of a thousand essential reasons for sorrow, the least trifle in the world is sufficient to divert him. Insomuch, that if we seriously consider it, he seems more to be pitied for being able to amuse himself with *things so* frivolous and mean, than for being distressed

ı real miseries. His diversions are infinitely
ıal than his uneasiness.
› is it that this man, who has lately lost his
and who was this morning entirely taken
.w-suits and litigations, now seems to think
ıore of them? Do not be surprised; he is
ken up with looking which way the stag
which his dogs have been in chase of these
He cares about nothing else now, not-
ing all his afflictions. If you can but make
into some diversion, you make him happy
ne; but with a false and imaginary hap-
t arising from the possession of any real
good, but from a levity of spirit, which
ı lose the memory of his real calamities, to
ıself to mean and ridiculous objects, un-
his attention, and still more unworthy of
It is the joy of a sick man, of a man in a
ıt arising from the health, but from the
f his mind. It is the laugh of folly and
It is wonderful to observe what trifling
ase men in their games and diversions.
that by keeping their minds employed,
ɔrve them from reflecting on their real
then such things keep them employed,
ıse the mind forms in them an imaginary
delight, to which it attaches itself.
› you take to be the object of those men,
see playing at tennis with such applica-
ıd, and such exertion of body? The plea-
ıasting to-morrow among their friends, that
played better than any body else. This is
ırce of their earnestness. And thus others
in their closets, for the sake of showing
d that they have resolved a question in
itherto reputed inexplicable. And many
ishly enough, in my opinion, expose them-
ıe greatest of dangers, to vaunt of some
have taken; nor are there wanting those

who kill themselves in taking notice of all this; not that they may grow wiser, but merely to show that they know the vanity of it: and these last are the most foolish of all, because they are so knowingly; whereas we may suppose of the rest, that they would not act as they do, but for want of knowing better.

One man passes away his life without uneasiness, by gaming every day for a trifling stake, that would be rendered unhappy, if you were to give him every morning the sum which he might win in the day, upon condition that he should refrain from play. It will be said, perhaps, that it is the amusement of the play which he seeks, and not the gain. Yet if you make him play for nothing, he will feel no eagerness about it, and becomes dull. It is not, therefore, the mere amusement which he seeks; a languishing amusement without any interest would fatigue him: he must be allowed to heat and rouse himself, by imagining that he should be happy in gaining that, which he would not accept, if it were given him on condition of not playing; and that he shall create an object of passion, which shall excite his desire, his anger, his fear, and his hope.

So that these diversions which constitute the happiness of men, are not only contemptible, but false and deceitful: that is to say, their object is merely a phantom and delusion, which would be incapable of occupying the mind of man, if he had not lost the taste and perception of real good, and were he not filled with baseness, vanity, levity, pride, and an infinite number of other vices; and they only relieve us under our miseries, by creating a misery more real, and more injurious. For such is whatever hinders us from thinking principally, about ourselves, and which makes us insensibly lose our time. Without this we should indeed feel dissatisfaction, but this dissatisfaction would lead us to seek some *more solid* means of escaping from it. But diver-

ceive us, amuse us, and lead us on heedlessly
raves.

ind having no remedy against death, igno-
nd misery, have fancied the way to be happy
hink nothing about them. This is all they
en able to invent to console themselves under
lamities. But a most miserable consolation
cause it tends not to the cure of the evil, but
the concealment of it for a very short time;
cause by concealing it, it hinders us from
recourse to such means as would really cure
is, by a strange subversion of the nature of
finds that disquiet, which is to him the most
evil, is in one respect his greatest good,
it may contribute, more than any thing else,
e him seek after real restoration; while his
ns, which he looks upon as his principal
e indeed his greatest evil, because they are
hings those which most effectually keep him
m seeking the remedy of his miseries. And
e one and the other are admirable proofs,
the misery and corruption of man, and at the
ne of his dignity. For he only grows weary
object, and engages in such a multitude of
, because he still retains the idea of his lost
ss; and not finding it within himself, he
seeks it in external things, without ever
g satisfaction, because it is neither to be
n ourselves, nor in creatures, but in God

CHAPTER XXVII.

THOUGHTS ON MIRACLES.

We are to judge of doctrine by miracles, and miracles by doctrine. The doctrine shows the nat of the miracles, and the miracles show the natur the doctrine. All this is true, and contains no c tradiction.

Some miracles are certain evidences of the tr others are not. There must be a mark by which may distinguish them, or they would be usel But they are not useless; they are fundament necessary.

The rule, therefore, which is given us, mus such as shall not destroy the evidence which miracles afford of the truth; which it is the princ end of miracles to establish.

Were there no miracles ever joined to falseh they would be in themselves demonstrative. If t were no rule by which we might distinguish tl they would be useless, and would afford us no re for our faith.

Moses has given us one rule, which is wher miracle is intended to lead men to idolatry; I xiii. 1, 2, 3. And Jesus Christ has given us anot "There is no man (says he) which shall do a mi in my name, that can lightly speak evil of n Mark ix. 39. Whence it follows, that whoever sp *openly* against Jesus Christ, cannot perform mir

ıme ; therefore if he does perform any, they erformed in the name of Jesus Christ, and erefore to be rejected. We see then the for the disbelief of miracles, to which we ɔ add any other. That in the old testament they turn us from God ; and that in the new, :y turn us from Jesus Christ.

t immediately on the sight of a miracle, we ıer submit to it, or have some strong reasons ɔntrary. We ought to examine whether the ho performs it, denies God, or Jesus Christ :hurch.

religion is false, which, as to its faith, does hip one God, as the author of all things ; :h, as to its morality, does not love one God the object of all things.

religion which does not now acknowledge ırist, is notoriously false, and miracles would .cient to demonstrate it.

ews had a doctrine from God, as we have us Christ ; and that was confirmed by mira- . prohibitions against crediting any workers les who should teach them a contrary doc- ey were also commanded to have recourse ıief priests, and to adhere strictly to them. whatsoever reasons we have now to refuse :f to the workers of miracles, it may seem likewise, with regard to Jesus Christ and tles.

theless it is most certain, that they were ılpable for refusing to credit him on account racles, for Jesus Christ declares, that if they ıeen his miracles, they would not have been " If I had not done among them the works one other man did, they had not had sin." 24.

ows therefore, that he judged that his mira- e infallible proofs of his doctrine, and that ı were under obligation to believe in him.

And, indeed, his miracles were what rendered the Jews criminal in their unbelief: for the arguments they might have drawn from the scripture during the life of Jesus Christ, would not have been fully demonstrative. We find in them, for instance, that Moses had said, a prophet should come, &c. but this was not sufficient to prove that Jesus Christ was that prophet, which was the whole question in dispute. Such passages were sufficient to show, that he might be the Messiah, and this, together with his miracles, ought to have convinced them that he was really so.

The prophecies alone were not sufficient as proofs of Jesus Christ during his life: so that they would not have been culpable for not believing in him before his death, if his miracles had not been decisive. Therefore miracles are sufficient, when we see that the doctrine is not inconsistent, and they ought, in that case, to be credited.

Jesus Christ has proved that he was the Messiah, in verifying his doctrine and mission by miracles, rather than by resting them wholly on scripture and the prophecies.

It was by miracles that Nicodemus was persuaded his doctrine was from God. "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him." John iii. 2. He did not judge of the miracles by the doctrine; but of the doctrine by the miracles.

Therefore although a doctrine may be suspicious, as that of Jesus Christ perhaps was to Nicodemus, because it seemed to destroy the traditions of the Pharisees, yet if there are plain and undeniable miracles on the same side, the authority of the miracle must overbalance any difficulty that arises in the doctrine: the reason of which is this immoveable principle, that God cannot lead into error.

There seems to be a reciprocal duty between God and man. "Come now and let us reason together," says God by Isaiah, Isa. i. 18. And in another place,

"What could I have done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isa. v. 4.

It is a duty men owe to God, that they should embrace the religion he sends them; and God owes to men, that he should not lead them into error.

But now they would be led into error, if any workers of miracles should publish a false doctrine, which did not appear visibly false to the eye of common sense, and if a much greater worker of miracles had not previously cautioned them not to believe such persons.

Thus if there were a division in the church, and the Arians, for example, who assert they have the authority of scripture no less than the Catholics, had performed miracles, and the Catholics had not, men would be led into error. For as a man who pretends to tell us the mysteries of God, is not worthy to be credited on his own private authority, so a man who, in proof of his communication with God shall raise the dead, foretel future events, remove mountains, heal diseases, deserves to be believed, and it is impious not to give him credit, provided he be not convicted of falsehood by some other person, who performs still greater miracles.

But is not God said to tempt us? And may he not therefore tempt us by miracles which seem to lead into error.

I answer, to tempt and to lead into error are very different things. God tempts; but he never leads into error. To tempt is only to present the occasion; which imposes no necessity on our belief: to lead into error, is to put a man under a necessity of embracing and regarding a falsehood. This is what God cannot do, and yet what he would do, if in a question which is obscure, he permitted a miracle to be wrought on the erroneous side.

From this we must conclude, that it is impossible for a man concealing a wicked doctrine, and representing it as good, by pretending to conformity with

God and the church, to work a miracle, in order insensibly to insinuate false and erroneous opinions. This cannot happen; and still less can it happen, that God, who knows all hearts, should work miracles in favour of such a deceiver.

There is a great difference between a man who is not for Jesus Christ, and declares it; and one who is not for Jesus Christ, but makes a pretence of being for him. The former may possibly work miracles, but not the latter; because it is plain of the one that he is acting in opposition to the truth, but it is not so of the other; and thus the nature of miracles is more clear.

Miracles, therefore, are a test of things which admit of doubt, between pagans and Jews, Jews and Christians, Catholics and heretics, the calumniator and the person calumniated, and between the three crosses.

This has been seen in all the contests of truth against error; in those of Abel against Cain, of Moses against Pharaoh's magicians, of Elijah against the false prophets; of Jesus Christ against the Pharisees, of St. Paul against Bar-Jesus, of the Apostles against the exorcists, of Christians against infidels, of Catholics against heretics; and this is what shall be also seen in the contention of Elias and Enoch against Antichrist. In miracles truth will always prevail.

In short, in every dispute concerning the true God, or the truth of religion, there has never been a miracle performed on the side of error, without greater on the side of truth.

By this rule it is evident that the Jews were under obligation to believe in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was suspected by them; but his miracles were infinitely more clear than the suspicions against him. They ought therefore to have believed him.

In the days of Jesus Christ some believed on him; others disbelieved him on account of those prophe-

which specified Bethlehem as the birth-place
› Messiah; whereas they supposed Jesus Christ
ve been born in Nazareth. But they ought to
inquired more diligently, whether he was born
ethlehem; for his miracles being convincing,
pretended contradiction of the doctrine con-
ng him to the scriptures, and the obscurity of
ppearance, did not at all excuse them, though it
ed them.

ius Christ cured him that was born blind, and
rmed many other miracles on the sabbath-day,
hich he blinded the Pharisees, who pretended to
› of his miracles by his doctrine.

e same rule which obliges us to believe Jesus
t, obliges us to disbelieve Antichrist.

ius Christ spake neither against God nor against
s. Antichrist and the false prophets, which
›retold in both Testaments, will speak openly
ist God, and against Jesus Christ. God will
permit a secret enemy to perform miracles
y.

›ses prophesied of Jesus Christ, and commanded
›ople to regard him. Jesus Christ has prophe-
›f Antichrist, and forbidden us to regard him.

› miracles of Jesus Christ were not foretold by
hrist, but the miracles of Antichrist are foretold
›sus Christ. So that if Jesus Christ had not
the Messiah, he would have led men into error;
›ey cannot be led into it, with any reason, by
›iracles of Antichrist. Therefore the miracles
ntichrist do not in any degree prejudice the
les of Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ foretold
›iracles of Antichrist, he had no apprehension
›e should impair the authority of his own.

›re is no reason whatever for believing in Anti-
, which there is not also for believing in Jesus
t; but there are many for believing in Jesus
t, which there are not for believing in Antichrist.
racles were employed in the foundation of the

church, and will be useful in preserving it to the coming of Antichrist, and to the end.

Wherefore God, to preserve this evidence to his church, has either confounded false miracles, or foretold them; and has, by one means or the other, raised himself above that which is supernatural with respect to us, and has raised us above it likewise. It will be the same in time to come; either God will not suffer the existence of false miracles, or he will produce greater.

For miracles have so much force and influence, that it was absolutely necessary that God, seeing it is so clear that he exists, should warn us not to credit them, when they were performed in opposition to himself; for else they might have been able to mislead us.

So that the several passages in the 13th chapter of Deuteronomy, which prohibit all belief in, or attention to those who work miracles, in order to pervert men from the worship of the true God: and that in St. Mark, chap. xiii. 22. "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect," and others of the like import, are so far from lessening the authority of miracles, that nothing can more clearly evidence their force.

The reason of men's disbelieving true miracles is want of charity: "Ye believe not," said Jesus Christ to the Jews, "because ye are not of my sheep," John x. 26. The reason of their believing false miracles is the same want of charity. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they may believe a lie," 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

When I have considered whence it is that men give such credit to the pretended remedies of so many impostors, so as often to put even their lives *into* their hands, it has appeared to me to be no other

than this, that there are such things in the world as real remedies; for it would be impossible that there should be so many false ones, and that they should obtain so great a degree of credit, if there were none that are true. For if there never had been any such things, and were all distempers incurable, it is impossible that men should ever have imagined they could produce any, and still more so, that such numbers should have given credit to those who pretended to possess them. For if a man should give out that he had a medicine that would preserve men from dying, nobody would believe him, there being no example of any such thing having ever existed. But as there certainly is a great number of remedies, the efficacy of which has been proved by the knowledge even of the wisest of men, credit is given to them on that ground: and as the thing cannot be denied in general, on account of particular real effects, the multitude who are unable to distinguish which of these particular effects are real, gives credit to them all. So the reason why some ascribe so many false effects to the moon, is, that she has some real influence on the ebbing and flowing of the sea.

And it appears equally evident to me that there could never have been so many pretended miracles, false revelations, witchcrafts, &c. but from there having been others which were real; nor so many false religions, but because there was one which was the true. For had there never been any thing of this sort, it is next to impossible that any could have imagined it, and still more so that others should have believed them. But because there were very remarkable things which were true, and were therefore believed by the greatest among men, this impression was the cause which made the greater part of mankind so capable of giving credit to those which were spurious. And therefore, instead of concluding that there are no true miracles, because there are false ones, we ought, on the contrary, to infer, that there

are true miracles because there are so many false ones; and that the only reason why there are false ones, is because there are others which are true; and that in like manner the only reason why there are false religions, is because there is a true religion. For the mind of man having been once led to these things by what is true, becomes afterward susceptible of admitting what is counterfeit.

We are commanded to hear the church, but not to believe miracles; because the latter is natural, and not the former. The one required a precept, which the other did not.

There are so very few to whom God makes himself known by these extraordinary interpositions, that it is our duty to profit well by those opportunities he has afforded us. For he only departs from the secrets of nature under which he is veiled, that he may excite in us faith to serve him with more ardour, when we know him with more certainty.

If God were continually to give fresh revelations of himself to men, there be no virtue in believing him; and if he had never given any, faith could scarcely have had any existence. But he is for the most part concealed, and only discloses himself occasionally to those whom he would engage in his service. This wonderful obscurity in which God is hid, impenetrable to human sight, is a powerful motive to solitude, and retirement from the view of the world. Before the incarnation, God remained hidden under the veil of nature which conceals him from us, and when the time was come for his appearance, he was still more hidden by clothing himself with humanity. He was much more easily known while he was invisible, than when he made himself visible. And at length, when he designed to accomplish the promise which he made to his Apostles, to continue with his church till the second coming, he chose the most strange and obscure concealment of *all,* namely, that under the elements of the Eucharist.

It is this sacrament which St. John calls in the Revelation the hidden manna. Rev. ii. 17. And I think that Isaiah saw him thus, when he said in the spirit of prophecy, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." Isaiah xlv. 15. This is the greatest concealment he can assume. The veil of nature which conceals God, has been penetrated by many infidels, who, as St. Paul testifies, have seen the invisible God, through visible nature. Rom. i. 20. Many heretical Christians have known him through his humanity, and have worshipped Jesus Christ as God and man. But as for us, we ought to esteem ourselves happy, that it has pleased God to enlighten us to discern him under the elements of bread and wine.

To these considerations we may add the mystery of God's Spirit, who is concealed in the scriptures. For whereas there are two perfect senses of them, a literal and a mystical, the Jews resting in the former, never so much as think there is another, nor apply themselves to search after it; so wicked persons, beholding the operations of nature, ascribe them to nature, without thinking of any other author. And as the Jews, seeing a perfect human nature in Jesus Christ, did not seek for another; "He was despised, and we esteemed him not," says Isaiah, in their name. Isaiah liii. 3. So also Heretics, seeing the perfect appearance of bread in the Eucharist, look for no other substance. Every thing contains some mystery. All things are the veils of their Creator. Christians ought to see him in every thing. Temporal afflictions hide those eternal blessings to which they lead; temporal enjoyments cover those eternal evils which they procure. Let us beg of God to make us know him and serve him in all things; and let us render him infinite thanks, that being hidden in every thing from so many others, he should in so many things, and in so many ways, have disclosed himself to us.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHRISTIAN REFLECTIONS.

THE ungodly, who abandon themselves blindly their passions, without either knowing God, or giv themselves the trouble to seek him, verify in th selves this one principle of the faith which t oppose, that human nature is in a state of corrupt And the Jews, who obstinately withstand the Ch tian religion, verify in like manner this other pri ple of the same faith, which they oppose, nam that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, and tha came to redeem mankind, and to rescue them f the misery and corruption into which they w fallen. And this they do as well by the stat which we see them at present, and which was f told in the prophecies, as by the prophecies th selves, which are still in their hands, and which t inviolably preserve, as containing the marks which the Messiah is to be known. Thus the dences of the depravity of men, and of redempt by Jesus Christ, which are the two principal tr which Christianity establishes, may be deduced f the wicked, who live in indifference about relig and from the Jews, who are its irreconcil enemies.

The dignity of man, in his innocence, consiste *ruling* and making use of the creatures; but, u

his present corruption, it consists in retiring from them, and in submitting himself to them.

Many err the more dangerously, because they take a truth as the foundation of their error. This mistake lies, not in the believing a falsehood, but in regarding one truth to the exclusion of another.

There are a great number of truths both in faith and in morals, which seem repugnant and contrary, all of which subsist together in wonderful order.

The ground of all heresy is the rejection of some of these truths; and the source of all the objections made by heretics against us, is their ignorance of some of these truths.

And it usually happens, that not being able to conceive the connection of two seemingly opposite truths, and supposing that the admission of one necessarily includes a rejection of the other, they embrace the one and exclude the other.

The Nestorians maintained there were two persons in Jesus Christ, because there are two natures; and the Eutychians, on the contrary, that there was but one nature, because he was but one person. The Catholics are orthodox in joining together both truths, the two natures and one person.

The shortest way to prevent heresies is to teach all truths without reserve; and the surest method of confuting heresies, is to expose them without reserve.

Grace and nature will be always in the world. There will always be Pelagians, and there will always be Catholics, because the first birth produces the one, and the second birth to the other.

The church, together with Jesus Christ, to whom she is inseparably united, merits the conversion of all those who are not in the true religion. And those who are converted, afterward assist the mother which has delivered them.

The body can no more live without the head, than the head without the body. He that separates from

the one, or the other, is no more of the body, nor does he belong any longer to Jesus Christ. All virtues, martyrdom, austerities, and all good works, are of no avail out of the church, and out of communion with the head of the church.

This will be one of the confusions of the damned, to see themselves condemned by their own reason, by which they have taken upon them to condemn the Christian religion.

The lives of men in general, and the lives of saints, have this in common, that all of them aspire after happiness; they only differ with regard to the object in which they place it; and each of them account those their enemies who prevent them from attaining it.

We ought to judge what is good and what is evil by the will of God, which can never be unjust, or erroneous, and not by our own will, which is always full of wickedness and error.

Jesus Christ in his gospel has given this mark of those who have faith, that they shall speak a new language; and indeed a renovation of thoughts and desires causes that of conversation. These new things which cannot be displeasing to God, as the old man cannot possibly please him, are very different from the novelties of this world, because worldly things, how new soever they may be, grow old by continuance; whereas this new disposition, the longer it continues the more new it becomes. "Our outward man perisheth," says St. Paul, "yet the inward man is renewed day by day," 2 Cor. iv. 16: and it will only be completely new in eternity, when we shall sing without ceasing "the new song," of which David speaks in his Psalms, namely, the song inspired by the new spirit of charity.

When St. Peter and the Apostles consulted about the abolition of circumcision, where the point in debate was the acting contrary to the law of God, they did not refer to the prophets, but only con-

sidered the reception of the Holy Ghost by persons uncircumcised. They judged it more certain, that God should approve of those whom he had filled with his Spirit, than that he should require an observance of the ceremonial law. They knew the only end of the law was the reception of the Holy Spirit, and that therefore as these men had received it without circumcision, that ordinance had ceased to be necessary.

Two laws are more adequate to the regulation of the whole Christian community, than all political institutions together; namely, the love of God, and that of our neighbour.

Religion is proportioned to minds of every description. The generality of men look only at its outward condition and establishment. And our religion is such, that its very establishment is a sufficient evidence of its truth. Others trace it up to the Apostles; the more learned go back to the beginning of the world. The angels see it better and higher still, for they see it in God himself.

Those to whom God has given an inward sense of religion in their hearts are truly happy, and thoroughly convinced. But as for those who have not this, we have no way of procuring it for them, but by reasoning: waiting till God shall imprint it himself on their hearts; without which, their faith is not profitable to salvation.

God, to reserve to himself the right of instructing us, and to render the difficulties of our own being unintelligible to us, has laid the knot so high, or, to speak more properly, so low that we are unable to reach it. So that it is not by the struggles of our reason, but by a simple submission of it, that we are made capable of truly knowing ourselves.

Ungodly persons, who profess to be guided by reason, ought to have their reason wonderfully strong. What then have they to say? 'Do we not see, that beasts live and die like men, and Turks like Christians? The Turks have their ceremonies,

their prophets, their doctors, their saints, their religious orders, as well as we, &c.' But does this contradict scripture? Does not the scripture avow all this? If you care but little about the knowledge of truth, this may be enough to set you at rest: but if you desire with your whole heart to know it, you must go more into detail. This sort of levity might be well enough about a vain question of philosophy; but not where your all is at stake. And yet, after making some trivial reflection of this nature, men go on again to amuse themselves, just as before.

It is an awful thing to feel all that we possess continually wasting away, and at the same time to set our heart upon it, without inquiring after something more solid and durable.

Our life ought to be very different on these two suppositions: one, that we may abide here for ever: the other, that it is certain we cannot remain here long, and uncertain whether we shall remain even an hour. The latter supposition is our case.

Let us imagine a number of men in chains, all condemned to die, and some of them slaughtered every day in sight of the rest, who see their own fate in that of their companions, and yet wait their own turn, looking carelessly at one another, without concern, and without hope: this is a picture of the condition of men.

The variety of parties in the world, ought to make you more earnest in seeking the truth. For, if you die without worshipping the true God, you are ruined. 'But, say you, if he had designed that I should worship him, he would have left me some tokens of his will.' Why, he has really left them, but you are careless about them: therefore, at least, inquire: it is well worth your while.

Atheists ought surely to offer nothing but what is perfectly clear. But a man must have lost his senses to affirm it is perfectly clear that the soul is mortal. *I freely* allow it is unnecessary to look deeply into

system of Copernicus, but it concerns us more
n our life to know whether the soul is mortal
mmortal.

The prophecies, nay even miracles, and the other
ofs of our religion, are not such as can be called
metrically demonstrative. But I only want you
r to admit, that it is not acting contrary to reason
believe them. They possess both clearness and
curity, to illuminate some, and to confuse others.
t the clearness is such as surpasses, or at least
ials, the clearest things that can be brought
inst them; insomuch that it is not reason that
determine men not to regard them; on the con-
y, it can only be concupiscence and depravity of
rt. So that there is sufficient evidence to con-
nn those who refuse to believe, if there be not
icient to overcome them. And hence it will
ear, that in those who are guided by the gospel,
grace and not reason that makes them follow it;
l in those who slight it, it is concupiscence and
reason that makes them reject it.

Who can do otherwise than admire and embrace a
gion which thoroughly knows those truths, which,
more we know, the more we shall be obliged to
nowledge?

A person who discovers the evidences of Chris-
nity, is like an heir who finds the title deeds of
estate. Would he say at once they are false, and
lect to examine them?

There are two descriptions of persons who possess
knowledge of God; those whose hearts are
nbled, and who love self-contempt and abase-
nt, whatever degree of understanding they may
endued with, be it little or much; and those
o have sufficient understanding to discover the
th, through all the opposition they can expe-
nce.

The wise men among the Pagans who affirmed
re was only one God, were persecuted; the Jews

were hated on that account, and Christians have been still more so.

I see no greater difficulty in believing the resurrection of the dead, or the conception of the virgin, than the creation of the world. Is it less easy to re-produce an human body than it was to produce it at first? If we were unacquainted with the natural mode of generation, would it appear more strange to see a child from a woman only, than from a man and a woman?

There is a great difference between quiet, and security of conscience. The former should only be derived from a sincere search after truth; but nothing can give the latter, but truth itself.

There are two articles of faith equally certain; one, that man, either in his state of creation, or in that of grace, is raised above all nature, made like unto God, and a partaker of the divine nature: the other, that in his state of corruption and sin, he is fallen from this greatness, and become like to the beasts. These two propositions are firm and certain: the holy scripture bears a positive testimony to both. For, in some places we read, "My delights were with the sons of men." Prov. viii. 31. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii. 28. "I have said ye are gods," &c. Ps. lxxxii. 6, and in others, "All flesh is grass." Isa. xl. 6. "Man is like unto the beasts that perish." Ps. xlix. 12. "I said in my heart, concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that themselves are beasts." Eccles. iii. 18.

The instances we have of the heroic deaths of the Lacedemonians and others, do but little affect us; for what indeed do they all signify to us? But the examples of the deaths of the martyrs touch us, for they are members of us; we have a common interest with them; and their fortitude may give birth to ours. There is nothing like this in the examples of the *Pagans*: we have no connection with them. Thus

we are not enriched by the riches of a stranger, as we are by the riches of a father, or an husband.

We never disengage ourselves from any thing without some degree of pain. We do not feel our chain, says St. Austin, while we willingly follow him who pulls it; but when we begin to resist, and to draw back, we become sufferers; the chain is put upon the stretch, and endures the utmost violence. Such a chain is our body, which death alone can break. Our Lord has said, that from the coming of John the Baptist, that is to say, from his coming in the heart of every believer, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Matt. xi. 12. Before we are touched from on high, we have nothing but the weight of our own concupiscence, which bears us down to the earth. But when God is pleased to draw us up toward himself, these two contrary efforts produce that violence, which God alone is able to overcome. 'But we can do all things,' as St. Leo observes, 'with him, without whom we can do nothing.' We must therefore resolve to endure this warfare all our life long, for there is no such thing as peace. "Jesus Christ came not to send peace on earth, but a sword." Matt. x. 34. Nevertheless we must acknowledge, that, as the scripture says, "The wisdom of men is foolishness with God." 1 Cor. iii. 19. So we may say that this war, hard as it appears to many, is peace with God, and this is the peace which Jesus Christ has brought. But it will not be perfect till the destruction of the body. And this it is that makes us wish for death; bearing, however, with life, for the love of him, who suffered both life and death for us, and who, as St. Paul expresses it, "is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think." Ephes. iii. 20.

We should endeavour not to be distressed about any thing, but to take every event for the best. I apprehend this to be a duty, and the neglect of it to

be a sin. For in truth, the reason why sin is sin, is merely because it is contrary to the will of God. If, therefore, the essence of sin consists in having a will contradictory to the known will of God, it seems clear to me, that when he discovers his will to us by events, we sin if we do not conform ourselves to it.

When truth is deserted and persecuted, this seems to be the time that the service which we yield to God in defending it, is peculiarly acceptable. He wills that we should judge of grace by a comparison with nature. And thus he allows us to believe, that as a prince dethroned by his own subjects, retains the most tender affection for those who continued faithful to him in the public revolt, so it appears that God will regard those with peculiar goodness who maintain the purity of religion, when it is attacked. But there is this difference between the kings of the earth and the King of kings, that princes do not make their subjects loyal, but find them so; whereas God never finds men otherwise than disloyal without his grace, and that he himself makes them faithful when they are so. So that while kings are wont to own their obligation to those who continue in their duty and allegiance; those, on the contrary, who persevere in the service of God, are under infinite obligations to him on that very account.

No austerities of the body, nor exercises of mind, but only the good emotions of the heart have any merit, or are able to support the pains of the body and the mind. For in short, two things are essential to sanctification,—pains, and pleasures. St. Paul informs us, that it is "through much tribulation," and afflictions without number, we must "enter into the kingdom of God." Acts xiv. 22. Now this ought to comfort those who feel these afflictions, because being forewarned that the path to the heaven they seek is full of them, they ought to rejoice at finding so many marks of their being in the

way. But these pains are not without their ıures, by which alone they can be surmounted. ıs those who forsake God to return to the world, do it because they find more enjoyment in the ıures of the world, than in those of union to ; and because this victorious charm draws them ', making them repent of their first choice, and ering them, as Tertullian speaks, the Devil's ents; so men would never abandon the plea- ı of the world to embrace the cross of Jesus ıt, did they not feel more real delight in con- t, poverty, nakedness, and in the scorn of men, in all the pleasures of sin. And therefore, as ıllian also observes, 'We are not to suppose hristian life is a life of sadness. We never quit pleasure but for the sake of a greater. "Pray ıut ceasing," says St. Paul, "in every thing thanks, rejoice evermore."' 1 Thess. v. 16—18. the joy of finding God, which is the spring ır sorrow for having offended him, and of the e change of our life. He that has found a trea- hid in a field, according to the parable of our , is so transported as to go "and sell all that he and buy that field." Matt. xiii. 44. Worldly have their sorrows, but they have not that joy, h Jesus Christ said the world can neither give ake away. The blessed in heaven possess this ithout any mixture of sorrow. And Christians this joy, mingled with sorrow, for having fol- l other pleasures, and for fear of losing it by other pleasures, which are tempting them with- ceasing. We should therefore unremittingly avour to preserve this fear, which both preserves moderates our joy; and when we find ourselves ed too far toward the one, we ought to incline lves toward the other, that we may keep our- s upright. Remember your comforts in the day fliction, and your afflictions in the days of re- ıg, says the scripture, Eccles. vii. 14, till the

promise which our Lord has given us of making his joy perfect in us, be fulfilled. Let us not, therefore, suffer ourselves to be beaten down by affliction, nor imagine that piety consists only in bitterness without consolation. True piety, which only receives its completion in heaven, is nevertheless so replete with consolations, that they fill its beginning, its progress, and its crown. It is a light so resplendent, that it brightens every thing which belongs to it. If some grief be intermixed with it, especially at its commencement, this proceeds from ourselves, and not from virtue; for it is not the effect of that piety which has been begun in us, but of that impiety which still remains. Root out impiety, and your joy will be unalloyed. Let us not therefore ascribe this sadness to devotion, but to ourselves; and let us only expect relief in our own sanctification.

What is past ought to give us no uneasiness except that of regret for our faults. And what is to come ought still less to affect us, because it is nothing with regard to us now, and perhaps we shall never live to see it. The present is the only time which is properly ours; and we ought to use this in conformity to the will of God. To this our thoughts should be principally directed. Yet the world is generally so restless, that men scarcely ever think of the present time, and the instant they are now actually living, but of those in which they are to live. So that we are always in a disposition to live in future, but never to live now. Our Lord hath not chosen that our foresight should extend beyond the day that is present. These are the limits which he requires us to observe, both for the sake of our salvation, and for our own repose.

We sometimes correct ourselves more effectually by the sight of what is evil, than by the example of what is good. And it is highly useful to accustom ourselves to derive instruction from evil, because it

is so common, whereas that which is good, is more uncommon.

In the thirteenth chapter of St. Mark, Jesus Christ discourses at large to his Apostles, concerning his second coming. And as whatever happens to the Church happens likewise to every Christian in particular, it is certain that this whole chapter describes as well the state of every regenerated person, and the destruction of the old man in him, as the state of the whole universe, which shall be destroyed to give place to the new heavens and new earth, of which the scripture speaks. The prediction which it contains of the destruction of the rejected temple, which is the figure of the destruction of the man of sin in every one of us, and of which it is said that "not one stone shall be left upon another," teaches us, that there shall not be left a single affection of the old man. And those dreadful civil and domestic wars, are so lively a representation of the inward trouble which they feel, who devote themselves to God, that nothing could have been more accurately described.

The elect will be unconscious of their virtues, and the reprobate will be unconscious of their crimes. They will say, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited

me not. Then shall they also answer him, s
Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athi
a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, an
not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer
saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as
it not to one of the least these, ye did it not t

Jesus Christ refused the testimony of evil s
and of men uncalled, and chose that of God
of John the Baptist.

While I have been writing down a thought,
sometimes escaped me; but this reminds me
weakness, which I am continually forgetting
that instructs me as much as the thought cou
which I have forgotten, for all my study is to
my own nothingness.

The defects of Montaigne are gross. He ab
in lewd and indecent expressions. These can
good. His thoughts on self-murder, and on
are horrible. He inculcates an indifference
salvation, without either fear or repentance.
work not being composed to lead men to piet
plan did not oblige him to that; but we are
obliged not to lead them away from it. Wh
may be said to excuse his licentious opinio
many subjects, it is impossible to find any
excuse for his Pagan sentiments concerning
For a man must have utterly abandoned all
ness, if he does not at least desire to die
Christian; and yet to die in carelessness an
concern, is the wish that runs through all hi
formance.

That which deceives us in comparing what
formerly in the church, with what we see in it
is, that in common we look on St. Athanasiu
Theresa, and the other holy saints, as being cr
with glory. Now that time has cleared up t
it does really appear so. But at the time whe
great saint was persecuted, he was a mere ma
bore the name of Athanasius; and St. Ther

her day, was like the other religious sisters of her order. "Elias was a man of like passions as we are," says St. James, (v. 17,) to wean Christians from that false idea which makes us reject the examples of the saints, as disproportioned to our own condition. They were saints, we cry, and not men like us.

In conversing with those who have an aversion to religion, we should begin by shewing them, that it is by no means contrary to reason; in the next place, that it is worthy of veneration, to inspire them with respect for it; and after this, we should describe it as lovely, to make them wish it may be true; and then we may demonstrate to them by irrefragable proofs, that it is true; we may show them its antiquity and holiness, its majesty and sublimity; and finally shew them that it is amiable, in that it holds out to us the true good.

A single expression of David or Moses, as for instance, this "God will circumcise your hearts," is sufficient to enable us to judge of their spirit. Supposing all their other discourses to be ambiguous, and to leave a doubt whether they were philosophers or Christians, one word of this kind is enough to determine all the rest. Here the ambiguity must vanish, however obscure it might appear before.

If we should err in supposing the Christian religion to be true, we can be no great losers by the mistake. But how dreadful must it be to err in supposing it false!

The easiest circumstances of life, in the opinion of the world, are the most difficult, according to the judgment of God; and, on the other hand, nothing is so difficult, in the opinion of the world, as a life of religion, whereas nothing is so easy as such a life, in the judgment of God. Nothing is more pleasant, according to the doctrine of the world, than to be high in office, and enjoy ample revenues; but nothing is more difficult, than to live in these according to

the will of God, and without taking delight and satisfaction in them.

The Old Testament contained the types of future happiness; and the New contains the means of attaining it. The figures were those of pleasure, the means are those of repentance. And yet the Paschal Lamb was eaten with bitter herbs, to teach us, that there is no arriving at joy, but by sorrow.

The word Galilee happening to be uttered as it were by chance, by the Jewish rabble, when they accused Jesus Christ before Pilate, occasioned Pilate to send him to Herod, which fulfilled the mystery of his being judged both by the Jews and the Gentiles. Thus a mere accident, in appearance, occasioned the completion of the prophecy.

A man told me one day, that he was full of joy and satisfaction, as he came from confession; another told me, that he was full of fear. I thought that these two men put together would make one good one; and that each of them was defective, in not possessing the feelings of the other.

There is a pleasure in being in a vessel tossed by a tempest, while we are certain there is no danger of its sinking. The persecutions of the church are of this description.

As the two great sources of all our sins are pride and sloth, God has been pleased to make known two of his attributes for their cure,—his mercy, and his justice. The property of his justice is to abase our pride; and that of his mercy, is to overcome our indolence, and excite us to good works; according to this passage: "The goodness of God leadeth us to repentance." Rom. ii. 4. And this respecting the Ninevites: "Let us repent, and see if he will not have mercy on us." Jonah iii. 9. Thus the mercy of God is so far from encouraging remissness, that, on the contrary, nothing is more opposite to it. And instead of saying, If our God were not a merciful God, we should use our utmost endeavours to fulfil

nmands; we ought, on the contrary, to say,
e God is a God of mercy, we ought to labour
ll our strength to fulfil what he has com-
l.

history of the church ought in propriety to be
the history of truth.

hat is in the world, is either " the lust of the
he lust of the eyes, or, the pride of life:" the
feeling, the lust of knowing, and the lust of

Miserable is that accursed land, which these
rivers of fire burn up, rather than water!

those who being upon these rivers are not
elmed, or carried away, but remain immove-
ınd who, not standing erect, but sitting on a
ıd humble seat, whence they will not rise till
ıt appear, after having rested there in peace,
ıretch forth their hands to him who will raise
p, and cause them to stand upright and firm
the gates of the holy Jerusalem, where they
› longer fear the assaults of pride! And who
n the mean time not to see all these perish-
ings pass away, but at the remembrance of
ear country, the heavenly Jerusalem, after
:hey sigh incessantly, because of the continu-
' their exile.

racle, say some, would confirm my belief. So
lk about what they do not see. But those
, which afar off seem to be the bounds of our
ease to bound it when we have reached them.
scover a scene beyond them. Nothing can
e versatility of our minds. There is no rule,
', without an exception; and no truth so
ıal as not to have some part, in which it
ı to disadvantage; and if principles be not
ely universal, we have sufficient pretence to
he exception to the present case, and to say,
ıot always a mark of truth; therefore in some
: is not so. We then have nothing more to do
persuade ourselves, that this is one of those

cases, and we must be very stupid indeed if w find no pretext for that opinion.

Charity is not a figurative precept. To sa Jesus Christ, who came to take away the figu order to establish the truth, came only to intr the figure of charity, and to remove the subs which existed before, is abominable.

The heart has its arguments with which r is not acquainted. We feel this in a thou instances. It is the heart which feels God, ar reason. This is perfect faith, God known t heart.

How many stars have our telescopes enabled discover, which had no existence with the ph phers of former times. They attacked scriptu account of its so often mentioning the immense ber of the stars. There are but a thousand and tw two of them in all, said they: we know it.

The knowledge of external things will neve sole us for our ignorance of morality in the ti affliction: but the knowledge of morality will al console us under the ignorance of external thin

Man is so framed, that by often telling him h fool, he believes it; and by often telling himse he persuades himself of it. For every person an inward conversation with himself, which it h concerns him well to regulate, because even in sense, evil communications corrupt good manners ought to keep silence, as much as possible, a converse with ourselves only about God, and we shall be most effectually convinced of our folly.

What is the difference between a soldier a Carthusian, as to obedience? For they are eq under subjection, equally dependent, and eng in labours equally painful. But the soldier all hopes to be his own master, and yet never bec *so,* for captains and even princes, are always sl *and* dependent. But yet he is always hopin

independence, and always endeavouring to attain it; whereas the Carthusian makes a vow that he never will be independent. They do not differ with respect to perpetual servitude, which is the portion of both; but in the hope which one cherishes, and which the other does not.

Our own will, though it should obtain all it can wish, would never be contented. But we are contented from the very instant that we renounce it. We never can be contented with it, nor otherwise than contented without it.

The true and only virtue consists in hating ourselves (because we are hateful by our concupiscence) and in seeking a being who is truly amiable, that we may love him. But as we cannot love that which is absolutely out of us, we must love some being who can dwell in us, and is nevertheless distinct from us. Now there is no such object, but the universal being. "The kingdom of God is within us." Luke xvii. 21. The universal good is within us, and yet is distinct from us.

It is wrong for persons to attach themselves to us, though they do it voluntarily, and with pleasure. We deceive those in whom we give rise to such a desire. For we are not the true end of any others, nor have we wherewith to satisfy them. Are we not on the borders of death, so that the object of their attachment must die? As it would be criminal in us to make them credit a falsehood, although we might recommend it with eloquence, and they might embrace it with pleasure; so are we blameable, if we labour to make others love us, and to make them attach themselves to us. We ought to warn persons, whom we find ready to credit an untruth, that they may not believe it, whatever advantage we may be likely to reap by their mistake; and we ought also to warn others against attaching themselves to us; because their whole life ought to be spent in seeking God, or in studying to please him.

To put our trust in forms and ceremonies, is stition; but not to comply with them is pride.

All sects and religions in the world, had reason for their guide. Christians alone hav obliged not to take their rules of acting from selves, but to inform themselves of those rules Jesus Christ delivered to the primitive Christi order that they might be transmitted to us. are certain persons who are weary of this re They want to have the liberty of following the imaginations, like the rest of the world. It is that we cry to them, as the prophets did fo to the Jews, "Stand in the ways, and se ask for the old paths, where is the good and walk therein." They answer like the "We will not walk therein; but we will ce do according to the thoughts of our own like the nations round about us." Jer. vi. 16. xx. 32, &c.

There are three ways of believing, through reason, through custom, and through inspiration. tianity, which is the only rational religion, none as its children who do not believe throu spiration. Not that it excludes reason or cu on the contrary, we ought to open our minds t viction by arguments, and to confirm ourselves belief of them by habitual custom. But Chris requires us, with humiliation of mind, to see inspiration which alone can produce this tru salutary end. "Lest the cross of Christ sho made of none effect." 1 Cor. i. 17.

We never do evil so cheerfully and effectua when we do it upon a false principle of conscie

The Jews, who were called to subdue natio princes, were themselves the slaves of sin Christians, whose calling it is to serve and be s are the true children of liberty.

Is it courage in a dying man, in all his we and agony, to dare an omnipotent and eternal G

I readily give credit to histories, the witnesses of which seal them with their own blood.

Holy fear proceeds from faith; false fear arises from doubt. The former leads to hope, because it arises from faith; we hope in that God whom we believe: the latter leads to despair, for we fear a God in whom we have no faith. Persons of the one character dread to lose God; and those of the other to find him.

Solomon and Job best knew and best spake of human misery; one, the most happy, the other the most unfortunate of men: one knew by experience the vanity of pleasure, as the other did the reality of affliction.

The pagans spake ill of Israel, and so did the prophet (Ezekiel), but so far from this giving the Israelites a right to reply, you speak of us as the heathens do, he lays his greatest stress on the heathens having talked of them as he did.

God does not expect us to submit our faith to him without reason, or to subdue us to himself by tyranny. But he does not intend to give us a reason for every thing. And to reconcile these contrarieties, he is pleased clearly to shew us those divine characters of himself, which may convince us of what he is, and to establish his authority by miracles and evidences that we shall be unable to resist, in order that we might afterward believe without hesitation whatever he teaches us, when we find no other reason to reject it, but because we are unable to know of ourselves, whether it be true or not.

There are but three descriptions of men; those who serve God, having found him; those who, not having yet found him, are employed in seeking after him; and lastly, those who live without either having found him or seeking after him. The first are rational and happy; the third are irrational and foolish; the second are unhappy, but yet are rational.

Men often mistake their imagination for their heart;

and suppose themselves to be really converted as soon as ever they think about conversion.

Reason proceeds slowly, upon so many views and such different maxims, which it ought always to keep in view, that it either becomes stupid or goes astray continually, for want of perceiving them all at once. The case is quite otherwise with sense, which acts instantaneously, and is always ready to act. We ought, therefore, when our reason has made us acquainted with the truth, to endeavour to imprint our faith on the sentiments of our heart, for without this it will always be wavering and uncertain.

The essential nature of God makes it necessary that his justice should be infinite as well as his mercy. Yet his justice and severity toward the reprobate is still less amazing than his mercy toward the elect.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MORAL REFLECTIONS.

THE sciences have two extremities, which touch each other. The first is pure natural ignorance, in which every man is born. The other is the perfection attained by great souls, who having gone through every thing that man can know, feel that they know nothing, and find themselves in the same ignorance from which they set out. But it is a wise ignorance that knows itself. Those who are between these extremities, who have got out of their natural ignorance, but have not been able to arrive at the other, have a tincture of science which fills them with vanity, and makes them vaunt of their attainments. These are the men who trouble the world, and judge the most falsely of every thing. The common people and the learned, usually compose the train of the world: the others despise them, and are despised by them.

The common people pay respect to persons of high birth. The half-learned despise them; alleging that birth is not a superiority of parts, but of chance. The learned respect them; not from the motives of the vulgar, but from much higher reasons. Certain zealots, who have but little knowledge, despise them in spite of those considerations, on account of which the learned respect them; for they judge of them by a new light with which piety has inspired them. But

real Christians honour them from a light which superior to that. Thus one opinion succeeds to an ther, both for and against, according to the differe degrees of knowledge which we possess.

God having made heaven and earth, which are u conscious of the felicity of existence, has been al pleased to create beings who might be capable knowing him, and who should compose one bod consisting of members capable of thinking. All m are members of this body; and in order to be happ it is necessary they should conform their own priva wills to that universal will which governs the who body. But yet it often happens that a man thin himself to be a whole, and seeing no other person whom he is dependent, he thinks he depends on upon himself, and therefore wants to make himse the centre and the body. But he soon finds, in su a state, that he is like a member separated from t body, and which not having in itself a principle life, can only wander and confound itself in the u certainty of its existence. At length, however, wh he begins to know himself, and is, as it were, com to himself again, he finds that he is not the who body, that he is only a member of the universal bod that to be a member, is neither to have life, being, motion, but for the body, and through the spi which animates the body. That a member separat from the body to which it belongs, has from that tim nothing more than a perishing and dying existenc that therefore he ought only to love himself for t sake of the body, or rather he ought only to love t body, because in loving it he loves himself, since l has no being but in it, by it, and for it.

Therefore, in order to regulate our love of ou selves, we must remember this body composed thinking beings, and that we are members of a whol and then we shall see in what way each memb *ought* to love himself.

The body loves the hand: and the hand, if it h

a will, ought to love itself in the same proportion that the body loves it. All love beyond this would be unjust.

If the feet and the hands had a private will of their own, they could never be in their proper order without submitting it to that of the body: without this they must get into disorder and misery. But in seeking only the good of the body, they procure their own good.

The members of our bodies are not conscious of the happiness which arises from their union to each other, of the admirable wisdom with which they are formed and connected, of the care which nature has taken to influence them with the spirits to make them grow and subsist. If they were capable of knowing this, and were to avail themselves of that knowledge for the purpose of keeping to themselves the nourishment they receive, without suffering it to pass on to the rest, they would not only be unjust, but miserable also, and would hate themselves, rather than love themselves; their felicity, as well as their duty, consisting in submitting to the conduct of that universal spirit to which they all belong, and which loves them better than they love themselves.

"He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," 1 Cor. vi. 17. A Christian loves himself, because he is a member of Jesus Christ, and he loves Jesus Christ because he is the head of that body of which he himself is a member. There is one whole, in which both are included.

Concupiscence and violence are the sources of all actions merely human. The former produces those which are voluntary, and the latter those which are involuntary.

Whence is it that a lame man does not offend us, and that a deficient mind does offend us? It is because the lame man acknowledges that we walk strait; whereas the crippled in mind maintain that it

is we who go lame. But for this, we should feel more compassion for them than resentment.

Epictetus proposes a similar question: why we are not angry when a man tells us that we have the headache, and yet fall into a passion when he tells us we reason ill or make a wrong choice? The reason is, that we can be very certain if we have not the headache, or are not lame; but we cannot be so certain that we make a right choice. For having no assurance that we do so, but because it appears so to us, with all the light we have, when another, with all his light, sees the contrary, this confounds us, and keeps us in suspense; especially if a thousand other persons laugh at our choice; for then we must prefer our own light to that of so many others, which is a perplexing and difficult matter. But men never contradict each other thus, about the lameness of any one.

The common people have some sound notions; for instance, that of preferring diversion and the chase to the study of poetry. The half-learned laugh at this, and triumph in showing from thence the folly of the world. But for a reason which they do not perceive, we are right in distinguishing men on account of external things, as birth and fortune; the vulgar triumph in shewing how unreasonable they think this to be. But, on the contrary, it is highly reasonable and proper.

It is a great advantage to persons of quality, that a man at eighteen or twenty, shall be as much known and respected as another can be, by merit alone, at fifty. So that they gain thirty years in advance without any trouble.

There are certain persons, who, to shew how unjust we are not to esteem them, never fail to urge how much they are respected by some people of quality. I would reply to them, show us the merit by which you have obtained the esteem of these persons, and we will esteem you in like manner.

If a man places himself at a window, to see those who pass by, and I happen to go that way, can I say he placed himself there to see me? No; for he did not think of me in particular. But he who loves a person on account of her beauty, does he love her? No; for the small-pox, by destroying her beauty, without taking away her life, will put an end to his love. And if I am loved for my understanding or memory, is it *I* that am loved? No; for I may lose these qualities without ceasing to exist. What then is this *I*, if it neither exists in the body nor in the soul? And how are we to love the body, or the soul, except for its qualities, which yet are not what make up this *I*, because they are perishable? For could we love the substance of a soul abstractedly, whatever qualities might be in it? That is impossible, and would be unjust. We, therefore, never love any person, but only the qualities of the person. Or if we do love any person, we must allow it is the assemblage of qualities that makes up the person.

The things we are the most anxious about, are most commonly trifling. As, for instance, to conceal the smallness of our property. This is a mere nothing, which our imagination swells to a mountain. Another turn of the imagination would make us discover it without pain.

There are some vices which cleave to us only by the intervention of others; and which, like branches, are taken away on removing the trunk.

When ill-nature has reason on its side, it becomes proud, and sets forth reason in all its lustre. And when austerity, or a rigorous life, has proved unsuccessful with regard to the true good, and we are obliged to return and follow nature, it grows prouder by that return.

It is not happiness to be capable of being pleased with diversion, because all this is external and foreign, and consequently dependent, and liable to be

disturbed by a thousand accidents, which give rise to inevitable afflictions.

There are some persons who would never have an author speak of things of which others have spoken; and if he does, they accuse him of telling them nothing that is new. But if the subject he treats of be not new, the method of treating it may be new. When two men play at tennis, they both play with the same ball, but one directs it best. I should as readily accuse him of using old words; as if the same ideas did not form another system of discourse, by a different disposition of them; just as the same words express quite different ideas by a different arrangement.

The world is full of good maxims; we only want the application of them. For example, we do not question that a man ought to expose his life to defend the public good; and many do this, but few do it in the cause of religion.

The height of wisdom is accounted folly, as much as an extreme want of it. Nothing is thought well of but mediocrity. The majority have decided this, and they bite at every one who goes out of the line, on which side soever it be. I will not oppose them; I consent to be classed among them; and if I refuse to be at the lowest end, it is not because it is low, but because it is the end, and I should equally refuse to be at the top. To get out of the medium is to get beyond humanity; the true greatness of man consists in knowing how to preserve it; and so far from becoming great by departing from it, he can only be great by not departing from it.

A man does not pass in the world as having any knowledge of poetry, unless he puts out the sign of a poet; or for being skilful in the mathematics, unless he holds out that of a mathematician. But persons of true sense hang out no sign at all; and make very little difference between the trade of a poet and that of an embroiderer. They are neither called poets

ometricians, but they form a judgment of them
ou cannot guess at their talent. They talk
thing which the company were speaking of
they came in. But you do not discover in
ne talent more than another, except when
s a necessity for using it, and then you will
e it; for their character is as much marked
not saying they are good speakers, when there
ccasion for oratory, as by our saying they are
en such an occasion presents itself. It is
re a false kind of commendation to say of a
his first entrance into company, that he is well
in poetry: and it is a bad token when people
peal to him, when the debate is about some
lar verses.

is full of wants. He only loves those who
isfy them. Such an one is a good mathema-
they cry: but I have nothing to do with ma-
ics. Such an one is a master of the art of war:
do not want to go to war. What we want,
re, is a man of probity, who can accommodate
to all our necessities.

n we are in health, we cannot think what we
do, if we were sick. Yet when we are so,
e medicines cheerfully; the disease gives us
ion to do it. We then no longer desire those
and diversions which we enjoyed when we
ell, but which are incompatible with the ne-
s of the complaint. Nature gives us new
s and desires agreeable to the present con-

It is not nature, therefore, which gives us
ters that trouble us, but ourselves, by joining
condition in which we are, the passions of that
on in which we are not.

ourses of humility are matter of pride to the
tious, and of humility to the humble. And
f scepticism and doubt, are matter of affirma-
the positive. Few people speak humbly of
ty, or chastely of chastity, or doubtingly of

doubt. We are full of duplicity, falsehood, and contradiction. We conceal and disguise ourselves from ourselves.

Noble actions, when concealed, are the most worthy of esteem. When I meet with any of these in history, they please me much. But yet they were not altogether concealed, because they are known; and this little manifestation of them, diminishes their merit; for the best part of them is, that they were intended to be kept secret.

A jester is a mean character.

Self is hateful; and, therefore, those who do not set it aside, but content themselves with merely concealing it, are always hateful. By no means, say you; for while we act as we do, obligingly to all the world, they have no reason to hate us. That would be true, if they hated nothing in this self, but the displeasure it occasions them. But if I hate it, because it is unjust, and makes itself the centre of every thing, I shall always hate it. In a word, self has these two qualities; it is unjust in its own nature, because it wants to be the centre of every thing; and it is troublesome to others, because it wishes to enslave them; for self is the enemy, and would be the tyrant of all others. You take away the inconvenience of it, but not the injustice; and therefore you cannot render it amiable to those who hate its injustice. You can only make it agreeable to those who are unjust, and whose interest it does not oppose; thus you will still be unjust, and will please none but those who are also unjust.

I do not admire a man who possesses one virtue in its utmost perfection, if he does not at the same time possess the opposite virtue in an equal degree. Such an one was Epaminondas; he had the greatest valour, joined to the greatest benignity; otherwise it is not to rise, but to fall. A man never shews true greatness in being at one end of the line; but in touching both extremities at once, and filling up all

hat lies between. But perhaps even this is nothing ore than a sudden transition of the soul from one xtreme to the other, so that in fact it is never in self any thing more than a point; like a fire-brand rned round and round with velocity. Yet this at ast shows the agility of the soul, if not its greatness.

If our condition were really happy, we should have occasion to divert ourselves from thinking of it.

I formerly spent a considerable time in the study the abstract sciences; but the small number of rsons with whom I could converse on them, disasted me with them. When I began to study man, saw that these abstract sciences are by no means lapted to him, and that I had strayed further from y proper condition, by entering into them, than hers had by remaining ignorant of them, I therere easily forgave their neglect. I thought I should least find more companions in the study of man, cause this is his proper employ. But I have been ain disappointed. There are still fewer of those ho study man, than of those who study geometry.

When all moves equally, nothing seems to move, in a vessel under sail. When all run into disder, none appears to do so. He that stops, sees, as om a fixed point, how the rest are driving on.

Philosophers suppose themselves very clever in aving comprehended all their moral system under rtain propositions. But why divide it into four ther than six? Why make out four kinds of virtue ther than ten? Why make it consist in *abstain* and *stain, (abstine et sustine,)* rather than in any thing se? But say you, here it is all summed up in a ord. Yes, but that is of no use, except you explain it; and as soon as you begin to explain it, id to open this precept, which comprehends all the st, they come out from it in just the same confusion ou were endeavouring to avoid. And thus if they all included in one, they are hidden, and useless; id if we develope them, they appear again in their

natural confusion. Nature has constituted them all distinct; and although we may comprehend one in another, they yet subsist independent of each other. So that all these divisions and terms have hardly any other use than that of assisting the memory, and of serving as a kind of index to the articles they include.

If we could reprove another with success, and convince him that he is in the wrong, we must observe in what point of view he looks on the affair, because in that way it generally is as he imagines; and to acknowledge that he is so far in the right. He will be pleased with this, because it intimates, not that he was mistaken, but only that he had not considered the thing on all sides. For we do not feel it any disgrace not to see every thing; but we do not like to acknowledge that we have been deceived; and perhaps the reason of this may be, that the understanding is not deceived in that point of view in which it actually considers the subject, just as the simple perceptions of the senses are always true.

A man's virtue is not to be measured by his great attempts, but by his common actions.

The great and the little have the same accidents, the same troubles, the same passions. But the former are at the top of the wheel, and the latter near its centre, and therefore are less agitated by the same degree of motion.

We are, for the most part, more easily persuaded by reasons of our own finding out, than by those which have been discovered by others.

Though men may have no interest in what they say, we are not always from thence to conclude that they speak the truth; for there are some who lie merely for the sake of lying.

The example of Alexander's continence has not made so many converts to chastity, as that of his drunkenness has to intemperance. Men feel no

shame in not being quite as virtuous as he, and think themselves very excusable in not being more vicious than he was. We think we have not quite reached the vices of the common people, when we see ourselves guilty of those of such great men; not considering that by these they level themselves with the most vulgar. We join ourselves to them at the same end at which they are joined to the vulgar. How lofty soever their condition may be, they are still connected in some way with the rest of mankind. They do not hang in the air, and form a totally separate society. If they are greater than us, it is because their head is higher; their feet are as low as ours. They all touch the same surface, and tread the same ground; and here they are as low as ourselves, or as children, or even as beasts.

It is the contest that pleases us, and not the victory. We like to see beasts fight; but not to see the conqueror tearing to pieces the animal he has vanquished. The only thing we wish, is to behold the issue of the combat; and as soon as that is decided, we grow cloyed. So it is in our diversions; and in our inquiries after truth. We like to see controversies, and the contest of opinions, but are very indifferent about the truth when it is ascertained. In order that we may notice it with pleasure, it must make its appearance in a dispute. And thus with our passions; we have a pleasure in seeing two contrary passions clash, but if either of them prevail, it changes into brutality. We never seek after things themselves, but after the pursuit of things. Thus in a play, quiet scenes are good for nothing; nor extreme distress, without hope; nor love, as a mere animal passion.

We do not teach men to be honest, though we teach them every thing else; and yet they pique themselves on nothing so much as that. Thus they chiefly value themselves on knowing the only thing they never learned.

What a senseless project it was in Montaigne to give such a picture of himself; and that, not by chance, and against his general maxims, for all men fail in something, but on his professed principles, and as his first and principal design. For to say foolish things by accident, or through weakness, is a common misfortune; but to say them with design, and especially such things as those, is insupportable.

Men of disorderly lives tell those who live regularly, that the latter deviate from nature, and that themselves are the only persons who follow her; as men who are sailing in a ship fancy those who stand on shore to be receding. Each of them say the very same: we must stand at some fixed point, to judge of the fact. The port itself decides with respect to the vessel; but where shall we find such a point in morality?

To pity the unfortunate is not concupiscence; on the contrary, we are happy in bearing such a testimony in favour of humanity, and of acquiring reputation for pity and tenderness, without its costing us anything. But then it is no great matter.

Would any man have thought, that he who enjoyed the friendship of the kings of England and Poland, and the queen of Sweden, should at length have wanted a retreat and asylum in the world?

Things have different qualities, and the soul has different inclinations. Nothing that presents itself to the mind, is absolutely simple, nor does the soul look at any thing with perfect simplicity. Hence we sometimes weep and sometimes laugh, at the very same thing.

We are so unhappy, that we cannot take pleasure in any thing, but on condition of being displeased if it do not succeed, which a thousand accidents may occasion, and do every hour. He that has found out the secret of delighting himself in good, without being disturbed by the opposite evil, has hit the true point.

There are different classes of men; the valiant, the dressy, the witty, and the pious; each of which ought to reign in their own circle; though not in any other. Sometimes they meet together, and we see the soldier and the beau foolishly fighting each other, to know which shall be the master, while the empire of each is totally different. They do not understand one another, and both of them are aiming at universal dominion. But nothing can obtain such a dominion, not even force; for this has no power in the republic of learning; it has no will but over external actions.

Ferox gens nullam esse vitam nisi in armis putat. They like death better than peace: while others would choose death rather than war. Any opinion gains preference to life, though the love of it appears so strong and so natural.

How difficult it is to propose any matter to the judgment of another, without corrupting his judgment by the manner of proposing it. To say I think it clear, or I think it obscure, leads his imagination to form that opinion, or provokes it to form the contrary. It is better to say nothing about the matter. For then the other will judge of the thing as it is; that is, as it is at that time, and as other circumstances, of which we are not the authors, shall make it appear; except, indeed, this silence, should have a similar effect, either according to the turn and construction which the person shall be in the humour to give it; or, according to what he may gather from our look and tone of voice. So easy is it to turn an opinion from its natural course; or, rather, so few opinions are there which are judicious and solid.

The Platonists, and even Epictetus and his followers, believe that God alone is worthy to be loved and admired, and yet they themselves desire to be loved and admired. They were ignorant of their natural depravity. If, indeed, they feel really dis-

posed to love and adore him, and find in this their principal joy, let them call themselves good and welcome; but if they feel an aversion to this; if they have no inclination but to establish themselves in the good opinion of men; and if their whole perfection consists in being able without restraint, to make others happy in loving them, I say that such perfection is to be abhorred. What! they know God, and are not desirous that men should love him! They want men to trust only in them! They want to be the sole objects of that happiness, which it is in the power of men to choose.

Montaigne was right in saying custom ought to be regarded as soon as it becomes custom, and we see it established, without stopping to inquire whether it be reasonable or not. This, however, is to be understood only of that which is not contrary to natural or divine law. It is very true, that people only follow it because they think it just, or else they would not regard it all; for men will only be kept in subjection to reason, or justice. Without this, custom would be thought tyranny; whereas in fact, the dominion of reason and justice is no more tyrannical than that of inclination.

But it is highly proper to obey laws and customs, because they are laws, and the people understand that so doing constitutes them just. For this reason they never abandon them, whereas if we make their justice to depend on any other thing, it is easy to render it disputable; and thus we make them ready to revolt.

How well have men done to distinguish one another rather by the exterior than by internal endowments! Here is another person and I disputing the way. Which shall give place to the other? The weakest of the two. But I am as stout as he. We must fight about it. But he has four footmen, and I have but one. That is evident: we have only to count them. I therefore must yield, and I am a fool

if I contest it. This keeps us at peace, which is the greatest of blessings.

The nature of our bodies deadens our afflictions and our quarrels; for we change and become other persons. Neither the aggriever, nor the party aggrieved, continue the same. It is like affronting a nation, and seeing them again two generations afterward. They are still the French, but not the same.

The soul must undoubtedly be either mortal or immortal. This ought to make an entire difference in a system of morality. And yet the philosophers framed their moral systems, altogether independent of it. What astonishing blindness!

The last act is always tragical, how pleasant soever the play may have been throughout. We throw dust to dust, and the curtain drops for ever.

CHAPTER XXX.

THOUGHTS ON DEATH: EXTRACTED FROM A LET WRITTEN BY M. PASCAL ON THE DEATH OF FATHER.

When we are under affliction for the death of a son who was dear to us, or for any misfortune w befals us, we ought not to seek for consolatio ourselves, or in other men, or in any part of creation, but we ought to seek it in God alone. the reason of this is, that no created being i first cause of those accidents which we call afflicti But the providence of God being the true and cause, the sovereign, and the disposer of them ought undoubtedly to repair immediately to source, and look up to their author to find solid solation. If we observe this rule, if we look on death which we are lamenting, not as an effe chance, or as a fatal necessity of nature, or as sport of those elements and particles of which is composed, (for God has not left his elect t caprices of chance,) but as the indispensable, in able, just, and holy result of a decree of God's vidence now executed in the fulness of time; that whatever has now happened, was from lasting pre-determined and present with God; say, by a transport of grace, we regard this o rence, not in itself, and abstracted from God, out of itself, and in the will of God, in the ju

of his decree, and in the order of his providence, which is the real cause that has produced it, without which it would not have happened, by which alone it has happened, and in the very manner in which it has happened, we shall adore in humble silence the unfathomable depth of his judgments; we shall reverence the holiness of his decrees; we shall bless the guidance of his providence; and uniting our will to the will of God himself, we shall choose with him, in him, and for him, the very same events which he has chosen in us, and for us, from all eternity.

There is no consolation, but in truth alone. It is evident that Seneca and Socrates have nothing which can convince, or console us, on these occasions. Both were in the error which has blinded all mankind from the beginning. They looked on death as natural to man; and all the discourses which they have founded on this false principle, are so vain and so destitute of solidity, that they only serve by their uselessness to demonstrate how weak men are in general, since the noblest productions of the wisest among them, are so childish and contemptible.

It is not so with Jesus Christ; it is not so with the canonical books of Scripture. There the truth is revealed; and consolation is as infallibly joined to the truth as it is infallibly separated from error. Let us, therefore, view death in that truth which the Holy Spirit has taught us. And we have the admirable advantage of knowing that death is in truth and reality the punishment of sin, imposed on man to expiate his guilt, and necessary to man to cleanse him from sin; that it is this alone which can deliver the soul from the concupiscence of the body, from which saints are never entirely free, while they live in this world. We know that life, and the life of Christians, is a continual sacrifice, which can only be completed by death. We know that Jesus Christ came into the world and offered himself as a sacrifice and a real propitiation;

that his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his sitting for ever at the right-hand of the Father, and his presence in the eucharist, are but one and the same sacrifice; and we know that what was accomplished in Jesus Christ, must be accomplished also in each of his members.

Let us then consider life as a sacrifice; and let the accidents of life make no other impression on the minds of Christians, but in proportion as they interrupt or accomplish this sacrifice. Let us count nothing evil but what turns a sacrifice to God into a sacrifice to the devil; and let us call every thing a good, which renders that which was a sacrifice to the devil in Adam, a sacrifice to God; and let us examine the nature of death by this rule.

In order to this, it is necessary to recur to the person of Jesus Christ; for as God only regards men through their mediator Jesus Christ, so ought they neither to regard others, nor themselves, but through his mediation.

If we do not look through this medium, we shall find nothing in ourselves but real miseries, or abominable pleasures; but if we consider all things in Jesus Christ, we shall find all is consolation, satisfaction, and edification.

Let us then view death in Jesus Christ, not without Jesus Christ. Without Jesus Christ it is dreadful, it is detestable, it is the terror of nature. In Jesus Christ, it is altogether different; it is amiable, holy, and the joy of the believer. Every thing, even death itself, is rendered sweet in Jesus Christ; and it was for this he suffered; he died to sanctify death and suffering to us. And as he was God and man, he was all that was great and all that was abject, that he might sanctify all things in himself, except sin, and might be an example to us in every possible condition.

To know what death is, and what death in Jesus Christ is, we must examine what place it holds in

respect to his continual and uninterrupted sacrifice; and in order to this we may observe, that in sacrifices the principal part is the death of the victim. The oblation and sanctification which precede, are the preparations for it, but death is the completion, in which, by surrendering its life, the creature pays to God the utmost homage of which it is capable; thus annihilating itself before the eyes of his majesty, and adoring his supreme existence, who alone essentially exists. There is, indeed, another thing subsequent to the death of the victim, without which its death would be useless; namely, God's acceptance of the sacrifice, which is signified by the scripture expression, "and the Lord smelled a sweet savour." Gen. viii. 21. This, indeed, crowns the oblation; but it is rather an action of God towards the creature, than of the creature towards God; so that the last act of the creature is its death.

Each of these circumstances were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, when he came into the world. "Through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself." Heb. ix. 14. "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Then, said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Heb. x. 5. Ps. xl. 7, 8. Here is his oblation; his sanctification immediately follows it. His sacrifice continued through his life, and was completed by his death. It was needful for him "to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory." Luke xxiv. 26. "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" and "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that he feared;" and God raised him from the dead, and clothed him with that glory, (which was formerly prefigured by the fire which fell from heaven on the

sacrifices,) to burn and consume his body, and to restore it to a life of glory. This is what Jesus Christ has obtained, and the purpose which was answered by his resurrection.

Thus this sacrifice being perfected by the death of Jesus Christ, and consummated by the resurrection of his body, in which the image of the body of sin was swallowed up in glory, Jesus Christ had performed every thing on his part; and nothing remained but that the sacrifice should be accepted of God, and that, as incense, it should ascend, and carry up its odour to the throne of the Divine Majesty. And thus Jesus Christ was in this state of immolation, offered, raised up, and received at the throne of God itself, at his ascension, in which he rose partly by his own power, and partly by the power of the Holy Spirit, which every where encompassed him. He was carried up as the odour of the sacrifices, which was the figure of Jesus Christ, was carried up by the air which supported it; and which represented the Holy Spirit. And in the Acts of the Apostles, it is expressly related that he was received into heaven, to give us an assurance, that this holy sacrifice, thus accomplished on earth, has been accepted and received into the bosom of God.

Such is the state of things with regard to our glorious Lord. Let us now consider them in ourselves. When we enter into the church, which is the world of believers, and more especially of the elect, into which Jesus Christ entered from the moment of his incarnation, by a privilege peculiar to himself as the only Son of God, we are offered and sanctified. The sacrifice continues through life, and is completed at death, in which the soul, entirely leaving all those vices, and that earthly love, the contagion of which had infected it during life, finishes the immolation of itself, and is received into the bosom of God.

Let us not therefore grieve for the death of be-

lievers, like Pagans without hope. We have not lost them when they die. We lost them, as it were, as soon as they were admitted into the church by baptism. From that moment they were God's; their life was devoted to God; their actions had no regard to the world, but for God. By death they are entirely separated from sin; and at this moment God receives them, and their sacrifice has its accomplishment and its crown. They have performed that which they vowed; they have finished the work which God gave them to do; they have fulfilled that which was the only end of their creation. The will of God respecting them is accomplished, and their will is absorbed in the divine. Let us not, therefore, separate what God has joined; and let us suppress, or at least moderate, by our understanding of the truth, the sentiments of corrupt and mistaken nature, which exhibits nothing but false representations, whose illusions pollute the holiness of those sentiments which the truth of the gospel ought to inspire.

Let us not consider the faithful, who are departed in the grace of God, as having ceased to live, although nature suggests it, but as beginning to live, which is the testimony of truth. Let us not consider their souls as perished and annihilated, but as quickened and united to the sovereign of life. And thus, by a regard to these truths, let us correct those erroneous sentiments which are so rooted in our minds, and those emotions of fear, which are so natural to man.

God created man with a two-fold love, love for his Creator, and love for himself; but with this restriction, that his love of his Creator should be infinite, that is, without any other end than God only; and that the love of himself should be finite, and always bearing a reference to God.

Man, in this estate, not only loved himself without sin, but could not, without sinning, have ceased to love himself.

Afterward, by the entrance of sin, man lost the former of these affections, and love of himself remaining the only passion in that great soul, which was capable of an infinite love, this self-love diffused itself, and flowed into the void which the love of God had quitted. And thus he loved himself alone, and all things with respect to himself, so that his self-love became infinite.

This is the origin of self-love! It was natural to Adam; and during his innocence it was just, but it became criminal and immoderate, in consequence of his sin.

This is the source of this love, and the cause both of its imperfection and its excess.

We may say the same of our desire for dominion, our love of ease, and other things. And it may also be easily applied to our dread of death. This was not only natural but just, in Adam, while innocent; because his life being then acceptable to God, ought to have been agreeable to man; and death must have been an object of horror, because it would have been the termination of a life which was conformable to the will of God. But when man sinned, his life became corrupt, his body and soul became at enmity against one another, and both of them against God.

Though this fatal change infected so holy a life, the love of life continued still; and the fear of death remaining the same, that which was just in Adam, is unjust in us.

Thus arose the fear of death, and the cause of its present defectiveness.

Let us then clear up the darkness of nature, by the light of faith. The fear of death is natural; and it was so in the state of innocence, because death could not have entered into Paradise, without destroying a life which was altogether holy. It was therefore just to hate it, while it could not take place without separating a holy soul from a holy body; but it is just to love it, now it releases a holy soul from

an unholy body. It was just to flee from it when it must have broken the peace between soul and body; but not now it terminates an irreconcilable dissension between them. In a word, when it must have punished a guiltless body, by taking away its liberty of honouring God; when it must have separated the soul from a body perfectly subject to and compliant with its volitions; when it must have put an end to all the happiness of which man is capable, it was just to abhor it. But now, when it ends a life stained with impurity, when it takes away from the body the liberty of sinning, when it delivers the soul from a powerful rebel, which was continually opposing all the means of its salvation, it would be highly unjust to entertain the same sentiments respecting it.

Let us not then abandon that love of life, which nature instils into us; because we have received it from God. But let it be a love for such a life only, as God gave it us for; and not for one contrary to that.

But while we allow of that love which Adam had for his life of innocence, and which even our Lord Jesus Christ felt for his, let us resolve to hate a life which is contrary to that which Jesus Christ loved; and to be afraid of such a death only, as Jesus Christ himself dreaded, a death which happens to a body that is acceptable to God; but let us not fear a death, which, as it punishes a sinful, and cleanses an impure body, will inspire us with quite opposite sentiments, if we possess any faith, or hope, or charity.

It is one of the grand principles of Christianity, that whatever happened to Jesus Christ, is likewise to take place in the soul and body of every Christian: that as Jesus Christ suffered in this mortal life, was raised to a new life, and ascended into heaven, where he sat down at the right hand of God the Father; so the body and soul are to suffer, to die, to be raised again, and to ascend into heaven.

All these particulars are accomplished in th during this life; but not in the body.

The soul suffers and dies to sin, in repe and baptism. The soul is raised to a new life sacraments. And at length the soul quits this and soars toward heaven, by leading a he life: which made St. Paul say, "Our conve is in heaven." Philip iii. 20.

None of these things take place in the body this life, but they will all be accomplishe afterward.

For, at our death, the body dies as to this life: at the judgment it shall rise to a new life the judgment, it shall ascend into heaven, and there to all eternity.

Thus the very same things happen to the and to the soul, though at different periods; a changes of the body do not take place till th the soul are completed; that is, after death. much that death is the consummation of the ness of the soul, and the commencement of th of the body.

Such is the admirable conduct of divine w in the salvation of souls! And St. Austin i us, on this subject, that God has disposed thi this manner, because if the death and resur of the human body were to be completed by be men would yield themselves obedient to the only from the love of life. Whereas the g faith shines with much greater brightness, passing to immortality, through the sha death.

It is not right that we should remain witho and without feeling, in the afflictions and tunes which befal us; like angels, who have sentiments of our nature: nor yet is it right t should indulge grief without consolation, lik thens, who have no sentiment of grace. I ought both to mourn and to be comforted like

tians; the consolations of grace should rise superior to the feelings of nature: so that grace may not only dwell, but be victorious in us: that by our thus hallowing the name of our father, his will may become ours, his grace may reign and rule over nature; that our afflictions may be like a sacrifice, which his grace will complete and consume to the glory of God: and that these particular sacrifices may be the forerunners of that universal sacrifice, in which all nature shall be consummated by the power of Jesus Christ.

Thus shall we derive advantage from our own imperfections, when they furnish the matter for this whole-burnt-offering. It is the object of real Christians to profit by their own imperfections, for "all things work together for good to the elect." Rom. viii. 28.

And if we look at these things closely, and consider them as they really are, we shall find in them great helps to our edification. For as it is certain, that the death of the body is only the image of that of the soul, and as we build on this principle, that we have reason to hope for the salvation of those whose death we lament, if we are not able to stop the course of our sadness and grief, we ought to draw this benefit from it, that since the death of the body is so terrible as to produce in us such emotions, the death of the soul would make us far more inconsolable. God has sent the first to those for whom we mourn, but we hope that he has rescued them from the second. Let us contemplate the greatness of our happiness, in the greatness of our misery; and let the excess of our grief be the measure of our joy.

One of the most solid and useful charities we can perform toward the dead, is to do that which they would desire of us, were they still in the world; and to put ourselves, for their sakes, into that condition which they now wish us to be in.

Thus we shall make them, in some measure, revive in ourselves; while their counsels still live and operate on us. And, as the authors of heresies are punished in another life, by the sins which they have bequeathed to those who come after them, in whom their poison still operates; so good men are recompensed in a better state, not only through what they have themselves been, but through those whom they have influenced by their precepts and example.

Man is most certainly too weak to judge justly of the course of future events. Let us hope then in God, and not weary ourselves with rash and indiscreet apprehensions. Let us commit ourselves to him for the conduct of our lives: and let not grief have the dominion over us.

St. Austin observes, that there is in every man, a Serpent, an Eve, and an Adam. Our senses and natural affections are the serpent; our concupiscence is the Eve; and the Adam is our reason.

Nature tempts us continually; concupiscence is for ever craving; but sin is not complete, unless reason assent to it.

Let us then leave this serpent and this Eve, if we cannot entirely expel them; but let us pray that God by his grace will so fortify our Adam, that he may become victorious, and that Jesus Christ may be the conqueror over him, and may reign in us to all eternity.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.

THE more discernment a man possesses, the more originals he will discover among mankind. People in common do not see this difference between men.

A man may have good sense, and yet not be able to apply it alike to all subjects: for there are those who judge correctly in a certain order of things, and yet are quite confounded in others. Some draw consequences well from a few principles; others draw consequences as correctly from things in which there are many principles. Some, for instance, thoroughly understand the effects of water, in which there are but few principles, but the consequences of them are so fine as not to be reached without great penetration. Yet these persons would perhaps be no extraordinary geometricians: because geometry includes a great number of principles; and the nature of a man's mind may be such, as to penetrate with ease to the bottom of a few principles, and yet not to dive into things where the principles are very numerous.

There are therefore two sorts of intellects; the one capable of penetrating quickly and deeply into the consequences of principles; and this is the genius for accuracy: the other is able to comprehend a great number of principles without confounding them; and this is the genius for geometry. One is

strength and exactness of mind, the other is extensiveness of mind. And one of these may exist without the other: for the mind may be strong, and yet contracted: or it may have a great reach, with but little strength.

There is a wide difference between a genius for geometry, and a genius for business. In the former the principles are palpable, but so far from ordinary use, that a man finds it difficult to turn his head that way, for want of practice; but if he does attend to them, though it be ever so little, he sees them in all their evidence, and must have a very distorted judgment if he draws wrong inferences from principles which are too gross to be mistaken.

But in business, the principles are in common use, and are obvious to all the world. There is no need here to turn the head, or to do ourselves any violence. The only thing wanting is a clear sight. But then it must be clear, because the principles are so unconnected and so numerous, that it is hardly possible but some of them should escape us. Now the omission of any one principle will lead us into error. So that the discernment must be very exact, to comprehend all the principles, and the mind must likewise be just, not to reason falsely from the principles when they are known.

All geometricians would, therefore, be men of business, if they were clear-sighted; for they do not reason falsely on the principles which they know. And men of business would be geometricians, if they could once turn their minds to the unaccustomed principles of geometry.

The reason then, why some very able persons are not geometricians is, because they cannot turn their minds to the principles of geometry: but the reason that geometricians are not men of business is, because they do not see that which lies before them. For being accustomed to the clear and obvious principles of geometry, and to reason only after having

clearly discerned and arranged their principles, they lose themselves in matters of business, the principles of which will not submit to any such arrangement. They are not to be discerned without difficulty; the mind rather feels than sees them; and it requires infinite labour, to make those persons see them, who do not discover them of themselves. They are things so nice and so numerous, that a man must have his understanding very subtle and clear, in order to apprehend them; for they must be perceived, in general, without the possibility of demonstrating them methodically, as may be done in geometry; because there are no such determinate principles, and it would be endless to undertake to produce them. We must see the thing at once, and at a glance, without the progress of reasoning; at least, to a certain degree. Thus it rarely happens that geometricans are men of business, or that men of business are geometricians; because geometricians will treat matters of business geometrically, and they make themselves ridiculous by beginning first with definitions, and afterward with principles, which is not the way to proceed in this kind of reasoning. Not but the mind does the very same thing, but then it does it silently, naturally, and without art; in a way that none of us can explain, and very few even perceive.

Men of business, on the other hand, having been thus accustomed to judge of things at once, are so amazed when we offer them propositions which they comprehend nothing of, and which they cannot enter into, except by means of definitions, and dry principles, that not having been accustomed to take things thus in detail, they soon become disheartened, and disgusted. But persons of false judgment are never either men of business, or geometricians.

Those, therefore, who are geometricians, and nothing more, judge correctly, but only if we explain every thing to them by definitions and principles;

for otherwise they are both erroneous and insupportable; for they only proceed rightly upon principles which are thoroughly elucidated. And those who have a genius only for business, have not patience to descend into the first principles of speculative and abstract things, which they have seen nothing of in the world and in common life.

It is more supportable to die without thinking of death, than to think of death, even when there is no danger of it.

It often happens, that in order to prove certain things, we make use of examples, which those very things might have been taken to prove. But nevertheless this is not without its use; for as we always think the difficulty lies in the thing to be proved, the examples we adduce are more clear to us. So when we would illustrate a general rule, we instance a particular case; and if we would explain a particular case, we begin with the general rule. We always find somewhat obscure in that which we are desirous to prove, and somewhat clear in that which we make use of to prove it. For when we propose a thing in order to prove it, our imagination is always possessed with the notion that it is obscure; and that on the contrary, that which we bring forward in proof of it, is clear, and thus we more easily understand it.

We fancy that all men conceive and feel alike concerning objects which are presented to them: but we imagine this without any foundation, for we have no proof it. I know very well that men employ the same words on the same occasions; and that when two men, for instance, look on the snow, both of them express their perception of this object by the same term, each of them saying it is white; and from this conformity of speech, we strongly conjecture there is a conformity of idea; but this is not absolutely demonstrative, although the chance lies on the side of the affirmative.

All our reasoning is reducible to submission to sen-

timent. Now fancy is like sentiment, and yet contrary to it; like it, because it does not reason; and contrary to it, because it is false. So that it is very difficult to distinguish between these two opposites. One man says that my sentiment is fancy, and that his fancy is sentiment, and I say the same of his. We stand in need of a rule; reason presents itself, but as this is pliable either way, it leaves us, at last, without one.

Those who judge of a work by rule are, with respect to others, like a man who has a watch, compared with those who have not one. One says, we have been here these two hours; the other says, it is but three quarters of an hour. I look at my watch; I say to one, you are tired; and to the other, you pass your time pleasantly, for we have been here just an hour and a half; and I laugh at those who reply that my time passes on heavily, and that I judge of it by my own humour, for they do not know that I judge of it by my watch.

There are men in the world who are good speakers, and yet bad writers. The place, the company, &c. warms them, and draws more out of their minds, than would be discovered in them without the glow this produces.

That which is good in Montaigne, cannot be easily collected. That which is exceptionable, I now mean exclusive of his morals, might have been corrected in a moment, if he had but been aware that he had made up too many stories, and talked too much of himself.

It is a great evil to follow the exception instead of the rule. We ought to be strict, and to oppose exceptions. But as there will always be some exceptions to every rule, we ought to judge rigorously, but yet justly.

In one sense it is true to affirm, that all the world is mistaken. For though the opinions of people may be sound in themselves, yet they are not so in their heads; because they fancy the truth to be where it

is not; there is indeed truth in their opinions, but not where they suppose it to be.

Those who have a genius for invention are but few; those who have none are more numerous, and consequently make the stronger party. And we commonly find that the latter refuse to the inventors the glory which they merit, and seek after, by their inventions. And if they resolutely maintain their claim, and treat those with contempt who invent nothing, all they get by it is, to be called by ridiculous names, and to be treated as visionaries. A man ought, therefore, to be very cautious of priding himself on this advantage, considerable as it is, and ought rather to rest satisfied with the esteem of the few, who know how to value it.

The understanding naturally believes, and the will naturally loves; so that if they be not directed to true objects, they will necessarily fix upon false ones.

Many things which are true, are contradicted; and many which are false pass without contradiction. Contradiction is therefore no mark of falsehood, nor is the absence of it a mark of truth.

Cæsar was too old, in my opinion, to go about to amuse himself with conquering the world. Such an undertaking was fit for Alexander, who was a young man, and not easy to be restrained. But Cæsar ought to have been more considerate.

All the world sees that men labour for what is uncertain, in voyages, in war, &c. But all the world does not see that connection of things, which demonstrates that they ought to do so. Montaigne saw that men are disgusted with those who are stupid, and that custom governs every thing; but he did not see the reason of either. Those who see effects and not their causes are, in comparison with those who see the causes, like those who have eyes only, in comparison with those who are possessed of understanding likewise. For effects are, as it were, sensible, but causes are discernible only by the understanding. And

though it is by the understanding that the effects are discerned, yet the understanding which discerns them only, is to that which distinguishes the causes, as the bodily senses are compared to the mind.

The sense we have of the falseness of present pleasures, and our ignorance of the vanity of pleasures which are absent, are the causes of our inconstancy.

If we were to dream the same thing every night, it would perhaps affect us as much as the objects we see every day. And if an artisan were sure of dreaming every night for twelve hours together that he was a king, I think he would be almost as happy as a king who should dream every night for twelve hours together, that he was an artisan. Should we every night dream that we were pursued by our enemies, and frightened by these troublesome phantoms, or that we passed all our days in a succession of labour, as going a voyage, or the like; we should suffer almost as much as if the things were real; and should be as much afraid of going to sleep, as we are now of awaking, when we have to fear entering on such misfortunes in reality. And, indeed, the misfortune would be nearly as great as the reality could be. But because our dreams are ever varying, and diversified, what they present us with affects us, much less than what we see when we are awake, on account of its continuance, which yet is not so constant and uniform, but that it changes also, though less abruptly, except on some few occasions, as when we travel; and on these we are accustomed to say, "surely I am in a dream:" for life is a dream, a little less inconstant.

Kings and princes play sometimes. They are not always on their thrones; they grow weary of them. Greatness must be sometimes laid aside, in order to be enjoyed.

My humour depends but little on the weather. My fogs and fine days are within myself. The good

or ill success of my affairs even does not much move me. I sometimes set myself against ill fortune, and the glory of overcoming it makes me master it with pleasure; whereas at other times I act with indifference, and even disgust, at prosperity.

It is a pleasant thing to consider that there are men in the world, who, having renounced all the laws of God and of nature, yet make laws for themselves, which they exactly obey; as for instance, thieves, &c.

Those great efforts of mind which the soul sometimes reaches, are things which it cannot keep up to; it leaps, as it were, to them, and comes down again as suddenly.

Man is neither angel nor beast; and the mischief is, that he who would be thought an angel, acts the beast.

Provided we know the ruling passion in any man, we make ourselves sure of being able to please him. And yet all men have fancies, which are contrary to their own good, even in the idea which they themselves form of good; and this inconsistency disconcerts those who wish to gain their affection.

A horse does not strive to be admired by his companion. We do, indeed, see some sort of emulation between them in a race, but this is of no farther consequence; for when they are in the stable, the most clumsy and ill-proportioned will not on that account give up his oats to the other. It is not so among men. Their virtue will not satisfy them of itself; they are not content with it, if it does not give them some advantage over others.

As we corrupt our understanding we deprave our sentiment. Both the understanding and the sentiment are formed by conversation: so that good or bad company may make or spoil them. It is therefore of the greatest importance to choose well in this respect, that we may rectify them, and not corrupt *them;* but we cannot make this choice, unless they

are already corrected, and not corrupted. So that here is a circle, and happy are they who get out of it.

We naturally suppose ourselves much more capable of diving to the centre of things, than of embracing their circumference. The visible extent of the world plainly surpasses us. But yet as we surpass little things, we think ourselves capable of comprehending them. And yet it requires as much capacity to descend to nonentity, as to extend to the whole. We must be infinite to do either. And it appears to me, that a man who could penetrate into the first elements of things, might also arrive at the knowledge of infinity. Each depends on the other; each conducts to the other. These extremes touch, and the farther they are asunder, the more they unite; for they meet in God, and in God alone.

If a man did but begin with the study of himself he would soon find how incapable he is of proceeding farther. For how is it possible that a part should comprehend the whole? But perhaps he will at least aspire to the knowledge of those parts to which he bears some proportion. But then the parts of the world are so closely related and connected to one another, that I believe it impossible thoroughly to understand one without another, or even, without understanding the whole.

Man, for example, has some relation to every thing which he has a knowledge of. He has need of place, to contain him; of time, to make out his duration; of elements, to compose his frame; of motion, to preserve his life; of heat and food, for nourishment; of air, for respiration. He sees the light; he feels surrounding bodies; in short, he holds an alliance with the whole world.

In order, therefore, to a knowledge of man, we must know whence it comes to pass, that he should need air for his subsistence; and to understand the air, we must know by what means it has such an influence on the life of man.

Flame cannot subsist without air; therefore to understand the one we must understand the other.

All things, then, being causes or effects, dependents or assistants, mediately or immediately, and all being connected with each other by a natural, but imperceptible tie, which unites the most distant and the most diverse, I hold it impossible either to know the parts without knowing the whole, or to know the whole, without an accurate acquaintance with the parts.

And what seems to complete our inability for the knowledge of things, is, that they are in their own nature simple, whereas we are composed of two opposite natures, spirit and body. For it is impossible that that part of us which reasons, should be any other than spiritual. And if it be pretended that we consist of nothing but body, that would exclude us much more from the knowledge of things; for there is nothing so inconceivable as that matter should be capable of knowing itself.

It is this composition of body and spirit which made almost all the philosophers confound the idea of things; ascribing to body the properties which belong only to spirit, and to spirit the properties which are peculiar to body. Thus they positively affirm, that bodies have a tendency downwards; that they aspire to their centre; that they flee from their own destruction; that they abhor a vacuum; that they have their inclinations, sympathies, and antipathies; which are all things belonging purely to spirit. And when they talk of spirit, they consider it as being in some place, and ascribe to it the power of locomotion, which are things peculiar to body.

Instead of receiving into our minds the genuine ideas of things, we colour the simple objects which we contemplate with the qualities of our own compounded being.

Who would not imagine, when we affect to com-

ose every thing of spirit and body, that we really mprehended their union? And yet this, of all ings, is what we comprehend the least. Man is to mself the most prodigious object in nature; for he annot conceive what body is, and still less does he now what spirit is, and least of all, how a body can e united to a spirit. This is the very summit of all is difficulties; and yet this is his own being. *Modus quo corporibus adhæret spiritus, comprehendi ab ominibus non potest: et hoc tamen homo est.*

When among natural things, the knowledge of hich is not necessary to us, there are any which we o not know the truth of, it may perhaps not be miss, that there should be some general error, to fix he minds of men. As, for instance, concerning the noon, to which we ascribe the change of seasons, he progress of diseases, &c. For it is one of the rincipal disorders of mankind, to have a restless uriosity about things, which it is impossible they hould understand. And I question whether it is ot a less evil, to lie under a mistake about things f this kind, than to labour under this useless uriosity.

If the thunder should fall on low places, poets, nd those who do not know how to reason on things f this nature, would be at a loss for want of roofs.

This dog is mine, says the poor child: that is my place in the sun. This is the beginning, and the picture of that tyranny which would usurp the whole arth.

The understanding has a method of its own, which is by principles and demonstrations. The heart has a method altogether different. We do not prove ourselves deserving of love, by a methodical detail of the causes of love; indeed this would be ridiculous.

Jesus Christ and St. Paul have much oftener used this method of the heart, which is that of charity,

than that of the understanding; because their principal design was not so much to inform as to inflame. St. Austin does the same. And this method chiefly consists in so digressing on those points, which have a relation to the main design, as to keep it continually in view.

People in common think of Plato or Aristotle as men in fine robes, and as personages always serious and grave. Whereas they were really good kind of men, who could laugh with a friend just as we do. And when they composed their laws, and their treatises of polity, it was to amuse and divert themselves. It was the least serious and least philosophical part of their lives. The most philosophical was to live in plainness and tranquillity.

There are some persons who put a mask upon every thing in nature. There is no king with them, but an august monarch; no such place as Paris, but the capital of the kingdom. There are places in which Paris should be called Paris, and others in which it should be called the capital of the kingdom.

When in perusing a discourse we meet with some words repeated, and yet, on endeavouring to change them, find they are so appropriate that this would spoil the composition, we ought to let them remain. For then to alter them would be a mark of envy, which is blind, and cannot see that the repetition is no blemish on such an occasion; for there is no such thing as a general rule on these subjects.

Those who force words, to form antitheses, are like those who make false windows for the sake of symmetry. Their rule is not to speak correctly, but to make their figures correct.

One language is with relation to another, like a cypher, in which words are changed into words, and not letters into letters. And upon this principle an unknown language may be decyphered.

There is a model of agreeableness and beauty, which consists in a certain relation between our own

nature, such as it is, whether weak or strong, and the pleasing with which we are delighted. Whatever is formed upon this model pleases us: a house, a song, a speech, verse, prose, women, birds, rivers, trees, chambers, dresses. Whatever differs from this model, is always displeasing to persons of true taste.

As we talk of poetical beauty, so we ought to talk of geometrical beauty and medicinal beauty; and yet we never use these phrases. The reason of which is, that we are well acquainted with the objects of geometry and medicine, but we do not understand wherein that agreeableness consists which is the object of poetry. We are unacquainted with the natural model, which we ought to imitate: and for want of this knowledge, writers have invented a set of fanciful terms, such as the golden age, the wonder of our times, the fatal laurel, the lovely star, &c. and we call this jargon poetical beauty. But if we were to imagine a woman dressed after this pattern, we should have a pretty lady so covered over with looking-glasses and tinsel chains, that instead of finding her agreeable, we should be unable to keep from laughing at her. For we know better what it is that makes a woman agreeable, than what makes a poem so. But they who do not know this, might perhaps admire a lady in such an equipage, and many a village would take her for the queen. Whence some persons have stiled sonnets composed after this manner, *the village queens*.

When in a natural discourse some particular passion or effect is described, we feel in ourselves the truth of what we hear, which was really in us before, though without our knowledge, and we find ourselves disposed to love the person who has caused us to feel it, for he seems not to have shewn us his goods, but our own; and this kindness makes us think him deserving our esteem: besides that such a coincidence of thought naturally produces love in the heart towards him.

Eloquence must contain that which is agreeable, and that which is real; and the agreeable part must also be real.

When we meet with a composition written in a natural style, we are surprised and enchanted with it, because we expected to see an author, and we find a man. But those who possess true taste are no less surprised, when, on opening a book, they expect to meet with a man, and find an author. *Plus poetici quam humanè locutus est.* Those do real honour to nature, who shew that she is able to speak on every subject, not even excepting theology.

The last thing we are able to decide upon in composing a work is the arrangement of its parts.

In composition we ought never to turn off the attention from one thing to another, unless it be for the sake of relieving it; and then it must be at a time when this is requisite, and at no other. For he that endeavours to divert his reader without occasion, wearies him. He grows disgusted, and disregards the subject altogether, so hard is it to obtain any thing from men but through pleasure, which is a coin, in exchange for which we give all that people ask.

Men love malignity, yet not toward the unfortunate, but toward those who are at the same-time both proud and prosperous; and we shall be deceived, if we judge otherwise of the matter.

Martial's epigram upon one-eyed men is good for nothing, because it gives them no consolation, and only serves to give an edge to the vain-glory of the author. But what is of no use except to the author, can never be of any value. *Ambitiosa recidet ornamenta.* We should study to please those who possess tenderness and compassion, and not those who are barbarous and inhuman.

A PRAYER

IMPLORING OF GOD THE RIGHT USE OF SICKNESS.

O LORD, whose spirit is so good and gracious in all things, and who art so merciful, that not only the prosperities, but even the distresses which happen to thine elect, are the effects of thy mercy, grant me grace not to act like an heathen in the state to which thy justice has brought me; but that, like a true Christian, I may acknowledge thee for my Father and my God, in whatsoever circumstances I am placed. For the altering of my condition can no way influence thine. Thou art ever the same, though I am subject to change: thou art no less God, when thou art afflicting and punishing, than when thou art consoling and shewing compassion.

II. THOU gavest me health to be spent in serving thee; and I perverted it to a use altogether profane. Now thou hast sent a sickness for my correction: O suffer me not to use this likewise to provoke thee by my impatience. I abused my health, and thou hast justly punished me for it: O keep me from abusing thy punishment. And since the corruption of my

nature is such that it renders thy favours
to me; grant, O my God, that thy all-powe
may render thy chastisements beneficial
heart has been filled with the love of the w
I was in possession of strength, destroy my
promote my salvation; and either by we
body, or the zeal of charity, render me
of enjoying the world, that my delight m
in thee.

III. O God, to whom I must render
account of all my actions at the end of m
at the end of the world: O God, who onl
the world, and all things in the world, to
the trial of thine elect, and for the punishn
wicked: O God, who leavest hardened sinn
delicious but criminal enjoyment of this
God, who causest our bodies to die, and a
of death removest the soul from all that i
the world: O God, who at the last mom
life wilt separate me from all things to w
attached, and on which my heart has be
God, who wilt at the last day consume th
and the earth, and all the creatures they
shew to all mankind that nothing subsists b
and that nothing is worthy of love but t
nothing is durable but thee: O God, who w
all these vain idols, and all these fatal obje
affections; I praise thee, O God, and I
thee all the days of my life, that thou
pleased, in thy mercy toward me, to antic
awful day, by already destroying all th
regard to me, by this state of weakness to w
hast reduced me. I praise thee, O my G
will bless thee all the days of my life, that
been pleased to make me incapable of en
delights of health and the pleasures of t
and that thou hast, for my good, in a m
stroyed those deceitful idols, which thou wi

ally annihilate, to the confusion of the wicked, in the day of thy wrath. Grant, O Lord, that I may in future judge myself by this destruction, which thou hast wrought in my behalf; that thou mayest not hereafter condemn me to that utter destruction which thou wilt make of my present life, and of the world. For, O Lord, as at the instant of my death, I shall find myself separated from the world, stripped of all things, and standing alone in thy presence, to answer to thy justice for all the movements of my heart: grant that I may consider myself in this disease as in a kind of death, separated from the world, stripped of all the objects of my affections, placed alone in thy presence, to implore of thy mercy the conversion of my heart; and that thus I may enjoy great consolation in knowing that thou art now sending me a sort of death, for the display of thy mercy, before thou sendest me death in reality, for the display of thy justice. Grant then, O my God, that as thou hast anticipated my death, so I may anticipate the justice of thy sentence; and that I may so examine myself before thy judgment, that I may find mercy hereafter in thy sight.

IV. Grant, O Lord, that I may in silence adore the order of thine adorable providence, in the disposal of my life; that thy rod may comfort me; and that having lived in the bitterness of my sins, while I was in peace, I may taste the heavenly sweetness of thy grace, during the salutary afflictions with which thou hast visited me. But I confess, O my God, that my heart is so hardened, so full of worldly ideas, cares, inquietudes, and attachments, that neither health, nor sickness, nor discourses, nor books, nor thy holy Scriptures, nor thy Gospel, nor thy most holy mysteries, nor alms, nor fastings, nor mortifications, nor miracles, nor the use of the sacraments, nor the sacrifice of thy body, nor all my endeavours, nor those of the whole world together,

can do any thing at all even to begin my conversion, except thou accompany them all with the extraordinary assistance of thy grace. I look up, therefore, O my God, unto thee, who art God Almighty, to implore a gift, which all creatures together could never bestow. I should not dare to direct my cries unto thee, were there any other that could hear them. But, O my God, as the conversion of my heart, which I ask of thee, is a work exceeding all the powers of nature, I can only apply to the Almighty Author and Master of nature. To whom, O Lord, shall I cry; to whom shall I have recourse, but unto thee? Every thing that is not God is unable to fulfil my desires. It is God himself that I ask and that I seek; it is to thee alone, O my God, whom I seek, that I may obtain thyself. O Lord, open my heart; enter into this rebellious place, that my sins have possessed. They hold it in subjection; do thou enter, as into the strong man's house; but first bind the strong and powerful enemy, who is the tyrant over it; and take to thyself the treasures which are there. Lord, take my affections, which the world has robbed me of: spoil thou the world of this treasure; or rather resume it to thyself, for to thee it belongs; it is a tribute I owe thee, for thine own image is stamped upon it. Thou didst form it there, O Lord, at the moment of my baptism, which was my second birth; but now it is wholly defaced: the image of the world is so strongly engraven on it, that thine own is no longer discernible. Thou alone wast able to create my soul; thou alone art able to create it anew. Thou alone couldst form it in thine image; thou alone canst reproduce it, and re-impress that defaced image; that is to say, Jesus Christ, my Saviour, the express image and character of thine essence.

V. O my God, how happy is the heart which can love so charming an object, where the affection is

so honourable, the attachment so beneficial! I feel that I cannot love the world, without displeasing thee, without hurting and dishonouring myself; and yet the world is still the object of my delight. O my God, how happy are the souls whose delight thou art; for they may give themselves wholly up to the love of thee, not only without scruple, but even with commendation! How firm and lasting is their happiness! Their expectation can never be defeated; because thou failest not, and neither life nor death can ever separate them from the object of their desires. The very moment which shall involve the wicked, and their idols, in one common ruin, shall unite the just to thee in one common glory; and as the one shall perish with the perishable objects, to which they had given their affections; the latter shall subsist for ever, in that eternal and self-existing object to whom they were so intimately joined. O how happy are those, who with the perfect liberty, and yet with the invincible inclination of their will, love perfectly and freely, what they are necessarily under obligation to love.

VI. Perfect, O my God, the good desires thou hast given me. Be thou their end, as thou art their beginning. Crown thy own gifts; for thy gifts I acknowledge them to be. I acknowledge them, O my God; and so far from presuming that my prayers have that merit that should oblige thee to grant them, I most humbly confess, that having given up to the creatures this heart which thou only formedst for thyself, and not either for the world or myself, I can expect no favour but from thy mercy; since I have nothing in me that can oblige thee to it; and all the natural movements of my heart, being directed either toward creatures, or toward myself, can only be provoking to thee. I thank thee, therefore, O my God, for the good desires thou hast inspired; and also that thou enablest me to thank thee for them.

VII. Touch my heart with repentance for my faults; because without this inward pain, the outward evils with which thou hast afflicted my body, will be a new occasion of sin. Make me rightly to understand that the pains of the body are only the punishment, and the figure together, of those of the soul: but, O Lord, make them prove likewise the remedy, by making me consider, from the pains which I feel, those which I was not sensible of in my soul, though it was diseased, and covered with sores. For, O Lord, the greatest of its maladies is this insensibility and exceeding weakness, which has taken from it all sense of its own miseries. Make me to feel them deeply, and grant that the rest of my life may be one continued penitence, to wash away the sins I have committed.

VIII. O Lord, although my past life has been free from grievous crimes, the occasions of which thou hast kept from me, it has still been exceedingly hateful to thee, from my constant negligence, my misuse of thy most holy sacraments, my contempt of thy word and inspirations, the idleness and total unprofitableness of my actions and thoughts; and the entire waste of all that time which thou hadst given me, to worship thee, that I might in all my business seek the means of doing thy pleasure, and of becoming truly penitent for my daily trespasses, which are common to the best of men, and therefore require that their whole life should be one continued repentance, without which they are in danger of falling from their righteousness.

IX. Thus, O my God, have I always been rebellious against thee. Yea, Lord, hitherto I have been always deaf to thy inspirations; I have despised thy oracles; I have judged contrary to what thou judgest; I have contradicted those holy maxims which thou hast brought into the world from the bosom of thine

eternal Father, and according to which thou wilt judge the world. Thou hast said,—"Blessed are they that mourn, and woe unto those who live in consolation." And I have said,—'Unhappy are they that mourn, and most happy are they who live in consolation. Happy are those who enjoy a plentiful fortune, a splendid reputation, and uninterrupted health.' And for what reason did I account them happy, but because all these advantages afforded them a greater opportunity of enjoying the creatures; that is, of offending thee? Yea, Lord, I confess that I esteemed health a good, not because it is a mean of serving thee by usefulness, of employing more days and nights in thy service, and of doing good to my neighbours; but because with it I could abandon myself, with less restraint, to more of the enjoyments of this life, and better relish its fatal pleasures. Grant me grace, O Lord, to rectify my reason, and conform my sentiments to thine; that I may account myself happy in affliction, and that while I am incapable of external actions, thou mayest so purify my thoughts, that they may no longer contradict thy own; that thus I may find thee within myself, while my weakness incapacitates me to seek thee without. For, O Lord, thy kingdom is in the hearts of the faithful; and I shall find it in myself, if I there discover thy Spirit and thy wisdom.

X. But, O Lord, what shall I do to engage thee to pour down thy Spirit on this miserable clay? All that I am is odious in thy sight; nor can I find any thing in myself that can be acceptable to thee. I see nothing, O Lord, but my sufferings alone, which have some resemblance to thine. Look, therefore, on the evils I now labour under, and on those with which I am threatened. Behold with an eye of mercy the wounds which thy hand has made. O my Saviour, who lovedst thy sufferings, even in death! O God! who for no other cause becamest incarnate

after the fall of man, and didst take on thee a body, but that thou mightest suffer all the punishment that our sins have deserved; O God, who so lovest bodies exercised with sufferings, that thou didst choose for thyself a body the most loaded with sufferings that ever came into the world; accept my body, not for its own sake, nor for all that it contains; for all deserves thy wrath; but on account of the sufferings it endures, which alone can be worthy of thy love. May my sufferings invite thee to visit me. But to complete the preparation for thy stay, grant, O my Saviour, that if my body has this in common with thine, that it suffers for my offences, my soul may have this likewise in common with thy soul, to be sorrowful for those offences; and that thus I may suffer with thee and like thee, both in my body and in my soul, for the transgressions I have committed.

XI. Grant me, O Lord, grace to join thy consolations to my sufferings, that I may suffer like a Christian. I pray not to be exempted from pain; for this is the recompence of saints; but I pray that I may not be abandoned to the pains of nature without the comforts of thy Spirit; for this is the curse of Jews and Pagans. I pray not to enjoy fulness of comfort, without suffering; for that is the life of glory; neither do I pray for fulness of suffering without comfort; for that is a Jewish state; but I pray, O Lord! that I may feel at once, both the pains of nature for my sins, and the consolations of thy Spirit by thy grace; for that is the true state of Christianity. O, may I never feel pain without comfort! But may I feel pain and consolation together, that I may hereafter attain to feel thy comforts only, without any mixture of pain! For so, O Lord, thou didst leave the world to languish in natural sufferings without consolation, till the coming of thine only Son: but now thou consolest and sweetenest the sufferings of thy faithful servants by

the grace of thine only Son, and fillest thy saints with pure felicity in the glory of thine only Son. These are the wonderful steps by which thou hast carried on thy works. Thou hast raised me from the first; O, conduct me to the second; that I may attain the third! O Lord, this mercy I earnestly implore.

XII. Suffer me not, O Lord, to be under such an estrangement from thee, as to be able to reflect on thy soul being sorrowful, even unto death, and thy body being overcome by death for my sins, without rejoicing to suffer both in my body and in my soul. For what is more shameful, and yet more usual with Christians, and with myself, than that while thou didst sweat blood, for the expiation of our offences, we should live in pleasurable gratifications? And that Christians, who profess to be devoted to thee, that those who by baptism have renounced the world to become thy followers; that those who have solemnly pledged themselves in the face of the church to live and die with thee; that those who profess to believe that the world persecuted and crucified thee; that those who believe thou didst expose thyself to the wrath of God, and and to the cruelty of men, to redeem them from their sins; that those, I say, who believe all these truths, who consider thy body as the sacrifice which was offered for their salvation; who look on the pleasures and sins of the world as the only cause of thy sufferings, and the world itself as thy murderer; should yet seek to gratify their bodies by those same pleasures in that same world: and that those who could not without shuddering behold a man cherishing and caressing the murderer of his father, who had laid down his life for that son, should live as I have done, with full delight in the world, which I know to be in fact the murderer of him, whom I own for my Father and my God, who was delivered for

my personal salvation, and who in his own person bore the punishment of my sins? It was most just, O Lord, that thou shouldst interrupt so criminal a joy as this, with which I solaced myself in the shadow of death.

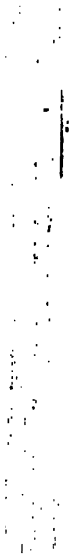
XIII. Take, therefore, from me, O Lord, that sorrow which the love of myself may produce in me from my sufferings, and from the want of the success I wished to my designs in this world, which had no regard to thy glory. But create in me a sorrow conformable to thy own. Let my pains in some measure appease thy wrath: let them prove the happy occasion of my conversion and salvation. Let me not hereafter wish for health or life, but to spend it and end it for thee, with thee, and in thee. I pray not for health or sickness, life or death; but that thou wouldst dispose of my health, my sickness, my life, and my death, for thy glory, for my own salvation, for usefulness to thy church, and thy saints, among whom I hope by thy grace to be numbered. Thou alone knowest what is expedient for me; thou art the sovereign Master; do whatsoever thou pleasest. Give me, or take away from me; conform my will to thine, and grant that with a humble and perfect submission, and in a holy confidence, I may dispose myself to receive the orders of thine everlasting providence, and may equally adore whatsoever proceeds from thee.

XIV. Enable me with constant uniformity of mind to receive all sorts of events, for as much as we know not what we ought to ask, and I cannot wish for one event rather than another without presumption; and without making myself a judge of, and responsible for, those consequences which thy wisdom has been pleased to conceal from me. O Lord, I know, that I know this one thing only, that it is good to follow thee, and that it is wicked to offend

thee. Beyond this, I know not what is best, or worst, upon the whole. I know not which is good for me, whether health or sickness, riches or poverty; or any thing else in this world. For this knowledge surpasses the wisdom both of men and of angels, and lies hidden in the secrets of thy providence, which I adore, and will not dare to pry into.

XV. Grant, O Lord, that being what I am, I may conform myself to thy will; and that being sick, as I now am, I may glorify thee in my sufferings. Without these I could not attain to thy glory, which thou thyself, O my Saviour, didst not please to attain but by sufferings. It was by the marks of thy sufferings that thou wast made known again to thy disciples; and it is by the sufferings they endure that thou also knowest who are thy disciples. Own me then as thy disciple, in the afflictions which I endure in my body, and in my mind, for the sins I have committed. And as nothing is acceptable to God, unless presented by thee, unite my will to thine, and my sufferings to those which thou hast endured. Unite me to thyself, fill me with thyself, and with thy Holy Spirit. Enter into my heart and into my soul, there to sustain my afflictions, and to continue to endure in me what remains of thy passion, which thou fulfillest in thy members, till the perfect consummation of thy mystical body. So that being filled by thee, it may be no longer I who live or suffer, but thou, O my Saviour, who livest and sufferest in me; that having thus been a small partaker of thy sufferings, thou mayest fill me completely with that glory which thou hast acquired by them, and in which thou livest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

END OF PASCAL.



PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

BY THE REV. THOMAS ADAMS.

PRIVATE THOUGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

CONFESSIONS.

LORD, I yield myself to the clear radiance and full
covery of thy word, to be convinced by it of sin.
know, with infallible certainty, that I have sinned
r since I could discern between good and evil;
thought, word, and deed; in every period, con-
ion, and relation of life; every day against every
mmandment.
Thy dread majesty I have not reverenced; thy
ereign authority and absolute right over me I have
kept in mind! I have set no value on communion
h thee; my heart has been alienated from thee,
will bent against thee, and I have lived inor-
ately to myself, seeking only my own ease in
ridly things, and neglecting my portion in thee.
I have not made a conscience of improving the
ents thou gavest me for the benefit of others and
good of my own soul, but most shamefully and
ckedly wasted my time in impertinent visiting,
e amusements, riot and excess, and all manner
sensual indulgence.

I have been proud and envious; wrathful, uncharitable, and censorious; morose, ill-natured, and imperious where I was obliged to show the greatest kindness; and ungrateful to my best benefactors. I shall never be better till I know how bad I am, and pray with more feeling.

I am in danger of losing two of the most precious things in the world, God's favour and my own soul, and I am yet at ease. It is the desperateness of my distemper that I am at ease.

I am lying under the curse of a disobedient passionate will. What pleases God does not please me; but often vexes, frets, hurts me, harrows up my soul.

O! when shall I feel the plague of sin, and long for a deliverance from it, as I would from a sore disease of my body.

Sin is still here, deep in the centre of my heart, and twisted about every fibre of it. Does my deliverance consist chiefly in the removal of it from my heart, or in the remission which is in Christ?

Is sin such a plague and burden to me, that I should think myself undone if there was no God to hear and answer my prayers for deliverance from it?

Who was it that said, "I will not sin against my God?" Who can say less; Why do not I say it?

All I have been doing in religion; the opinions I have taken up, the appearance of it I have put on; my seeming zeal for it—have too often been nothing but a contrivance to keep the Spirit's fire out of my heart, and give some kind of ease to my mind and conscience, without coming to the true point, viz. pure conformity to the will of God, with a total denial of self.

My great controversy is with myself, and I am resolved to have none with others till I have put things upon a better footing at home.

What will the next hour do for me that this cannot?

Past sin I see and lament; but not present sin, though struggling against it; or not in all its guilt, and as I shall see it hereafter.

Go, sin, (and O Lord, do thou speak it this day with my heart!) go for ever, thou rebel to God; thou crucifier of Christ; thou griever of the Spirit; thou curse of the earth; thou poison in my blood; thou plague of my soul, and bane of all my happiness.

I content myself with telling God that I want his graces, and yet can bear well enough to be without them.

Devoted to ease and sloth, never easy but in doing nothing, and always contriving to have nothing to do.

If I love God, I must love him for his holiness, and how then can I love sin? Nevertheless I have full conviction in myself that I do not hate it as I ought.

Where have I not sinned? The reason is evident, I carry myself about with me.

I would have joy of Christ, and take possession of his benefits, without his heart, without entering into his views, or taking part in his labours.

It is my great unhappiness and curse of my nature, that I cannot please both God and myself.

'Grant that this day I fall into no sin.' When I was saying these words, Feb. 23, 1763, I sinned grievously by an uncharitable thought of C. S.

I pray faintly, and with reserve, merely to quiet conscience, for present ease, and almost wishing not to be heard. In a full prayer for full deliverance, there is hope.

All my reading and pursuit of knowledge is more with a view to talking, than my own private use, or the benefit of others.

Day by day I am in pursuit of pleasure from animal gratifications, and my life is still propped by sensuality, only a little more decently than formerly.

I should be ready to die with shame and vexation if others knew what I have been doing in the world,

and what I am; it gives me but little concern that the eye of God is always upon me.

In bodily ailments I look out every way for help without delay. I have no such anxiety for my soul, though I feel the plague of it, and know of an infallible physician.

If I might have my beloved enjoyments, and live cordially to my own will as long as I pleased, I do not perceive that I should choose to die soon, and go to heaven for the sake of being with God and freed from sin.

In a state of greater danger and horror from self, (January 1768) than if I was in a town on fire at midnight, with two lions, a tiger, and three bears broke loose, and devouring all before them.

Two things I know with infallible certainty, that I cannot help myself, and that I am unhelped. I have wishes, form resolutions, make efforts, say prayers, mention particular sins; but do not find that I am a jot better. The only hopeful thing in my case is, that I do not despair.

Whether a late occurrence was a providential direction or not, it has convinced me, beyond all doubt, that I never reflected enough upon the uncertainty and emptiness of worldly things, and that my heart and treasure are not so much in heaven as I imagined.

"Woe be to the idol (Heb. good for nothing) shepherd!" I am a sinful creature. Lord, pardon me and pity my weakness, and make me duly sensible of what I am, that I may humble myself before thee. Preserve me from self-love, and from the love of the world, and from the workings of a carnal mind, and bring me back again to thyself, through Jesus Christ by the Spirit. Amen.

I want one point of selfishness, which is to convert the word of God to my own use. All the reflections I make upon the pride, corruption, blindness, and deadly fall of man, upon the necessity of the daily

is, and death to the world, I bestow freely upon ers; and am hindered by the deceitfulness of my i heart, and the artifice of the devil, from turning edge of them upon myself.

have just religion enough to make me gloomy, ose, proud, censorious; but not enough to make me erful, easy, good-natured, humble, and charitable. The same failings, perverse tempers, and evil its which I see and abhor justly in others, I know believe to be in myself, and possibly in a higher ree; and yet in spite of my reason, judgment, conviction, in spite of all the efforts I can use, I her do nor can see them in the same light in elf that I do in others.

have lived hitherto in a continual state of dark- , deception, and lying to myself. Though I have tised one kind of self-denial, so as to be taken ome, and almost to take myself, for a Christian ed, I now find, by a recent instance, that the n which binds me to the world, is as strong as . I am resolved for the future not to believe any g of myself till after a sufficient time of trial.

want humility; for what? To be admired. My e will hardly let me believe this, though I am it is truth.

certain person told me, that in advising, speak- of religious matters, and recommending religious hs, I was fierce, passionate, uncondescending. ised be God, I am sensible of it, and may God s my friend for the admonition, though I fear it eeded in part from anger. See and consider, . v. 19, 26; vi. 1, 3. I cannot help observing I had a very strong touch of this matter upon my it, a day or two before my friend told me of it.

When I hear of any crimes or series of villany, I k I have got a plausible occasion of giving full e to the passion of hatred, and my indignation ediately rises to the utmost: but then I feel nctly within myself that it is not against the sin,

but the person; and without any mixture of pity, I fairly give him up to destruction, and could rejoice to be the author and instrument of his sufferings: though this might be excused, as proceeding from a proper detestation of vice, yet I fear there is little in it at the bottom, besides pride and self-conceit, which are always accompanied with a lurking, diabolical malignity of heart.

When I see others astonishingly blind to their failings, I suppose it to be my own case, and should think that man my friend who helps to open my eyes.

The great work is still to do; the heart is kept back, and God will accept nothing less from me. My guilt is damnable in withholding it, because I know and believe his love, and what Christ has done to gain my consent—O heavens! to what?—my own happiness.

I should be ready and willing to show my warmest gratitude to the person who can give me ease from pain, or tell me of a cure for my body. O Jesus! what hast thou not done and suffered for my soul! how coldly do I think of it; how poorly do I requite it!

Thank God for decay, pain, and suffering; thank God that I was born to die, thank God that I can die; thank God the time is near; thank God for the prospect and hope of a better world; and thank God for strong consolation through Christ.

I had rather see my own faults than those of other people.

I will not form any schism, nor have another religion for the world. So help me God.

I have been fool enough all my life to do every thing with a view to please, and, for the most part, to defeat my own design.

I have been ready enough all my life, to prefer myself to all others. When shall I be Christian enough to honour all men, and sink down into my own nothingness?

St. Paul knew human nature but too well, when

he said, " Their feet are swift to shed blood," Rom. iii. 15. I protest I am often catching myself at it; and do verily believe that, if we could be sincere, we should find within ourselves abundant proof of the assertion. Strange, that I should be conscious of such a nature, and yet unhumbled! but then at the worst, and in the worst of men, there is still a capability of goodness; and therefore, so long as I have breath, I will present my case before the God of my life, ' Thou, who hatest evil infinitely, and infinitely willest the destruction of it, and wouldest not the death of a sinner, discover to me this whole depth and mystery of iniquity, that seeing it by a ray of light from thee, I may be inspired with thy own hatred of it, and enabled by thee to remove all the impediments to the manifestation of thy power and presence in my soul.'

I cannot perceive any other principles in myself than those of fear and shame. I would disobey God if I durst, and, in some instances, I even durst do it, upon a confused hope of mercy, or future repentance, if it was not for fear of hurting my reputation.

When I return to a better temper, after having been under the impressions of black melancholy; that is, from being morose, sullen, discontented, impatient, quarrelsome; I cannot help saying, what a beast and devil I was; meaning that I am so no longer. An open confession of this kind, is looked upon as a mark of great ingenuousness, when, in truth, it is nothing but self-deception, counterfeit humility, and a stratagem to reinstate myself in my own good opinion, or the esteem of others. The style of the confession should run in the present tense, *I am, I am, I am;* for the nature is the same, though at present it may be smoothed over with a handsome appearance, as a filthy puddle is always the same, though it does not always smell alike.

Prayer and other spiritual exercises are often a

weariness to me; a task and a force upon nature. I am but too well pleased with pretences for omitting them; and when they are over, I feel myself at ease, as it were after the removal of a heavy weight: 'Yet thou, O my Saviour, dost warrant and command my importunity and earnestness in asking under all discouragements; I will therefore still present myself before the throne of grace, notwithstanding the want of sensible consolations. Fear not, my soul; the operations of the Spirit are in secret, and the daily growth of the spiritual man is imperceptible as that of corn.' Mark iv. 27. John iii. 8.

I have all my life long been considering what I would do in such and such circumstances, and putting off the season of working to some imaginary period, without ever duly considering what I can do at present, or using the opportunities and abilities I have.

It is in vain to struggle against nature; or, which is the same thing, habit. No caution, consideration, or effort, howsoever repeated, can set me free. I find myself exactly in the state described by St. Paul, Rom. vii. and am always crying out with him, "Who shall deliver me?" What immediately follows, fills me with hope and consolation. I am absolutely certain that my deliverance must come from God; and if he pleases to offer it, I will not be so perverse as to take up needless exceptions to his method. There is a great deal in the person and religion of Christ to engage my attention; and I want deliverance so much, that I could almost accept it from the hands of Mahomet, if he could give it.

I have for some years been giving myself airs in religion, and assuming a port which does by no means belong to me. I fancied that I must necessarily be something extraordinary, because I endeavoured to be so. I am sensible that all the while I advanced in nothing but outside and hypocrisy. I

ow see the reason of it. The work was my own, nd the event accordingly, shame and confusion, and onviction of my own impotence.

I know that I am hateful and contemptible, and et I cannot help idolizing that painted thing which myself am; nor do I ever think worse of any man ır being so mistaken as to offer me the incense of his steem.

In points wherein I thought it was clear I could lmost stand upon my own defence before God, I ıily discover my hypocrisy and infinite defects. ord, what is man! in thy sight shall no flesh be ıstified; no not in any one instance.

The doctrine of faith in a Redeemer, I find, will be o motive of love and obedience to me, or encourage- ıent to inculcate it zealously and heartily to others, ill it is apprehended by me in a different manner han at present it is.

I seem to myself as a dark flint. By what kind of stroke God will fetch light out of me I know not.

I would not give myself one hour's trouble for what ıe world calls immortal glory; and yet I am sure ıat a sense of reputation, or rather dread of shame, ixes itself with all I do.

I could wish to have a perfect benevolence for the ost contemptible creature upon earth, and at the ıme time that no other object had more power to ıtangle my affections.

It is a dreadful truth, and if it were not for the ds and consolations of the gospel, would even kill e to think of it, that the sole ground, being, and sence of rectitude in the soul, and consequently, l its capacities for happiness, are a hearty love and king of God for what he is, and for all that he is.

When God takes off his hand, and leaves me to ıyself, as I believe he does for my conviction and ımiliation, I can feel nothing within myself but the emper and foundation of hell.

I perceive by some fatal symptoms, that higher

qualifications for usefulness at present, would only fill me with pride; it is therefore better for me that they should be withholden till I am disposed to receive them with proper humility, and as the means of a blessed intercourse between God and my own soul.

Lately resolving and praying, as I thought sincerely, against a certain sourness and malignity of temper, to which I am subject, all on a sudden, without any preceding cause or occasion given, I was hurried, as it were, forcibly into it, and found myself more under the tormenting influence of it than ever I had been in all my life.

Whenever I attempt to pray for others, I am soon made sensible that I do it in a cold, heartless manner; a plain indication that love is not at the bottom. It is an awful moment when the soul meets God in private, to stand the test of his all-searching eye.

My state of being, continuance in it, and every thing relating to it, are ordered by God in such a manner as he knows will conduce most to his own glory in my happiness and salvation; and yet I am conscious to myself of a settled adherence to my own choice, and a perpetual struggling against what he wills and ordains. What ground is here for humiliation! What further proof do I need of my corruption? And what a jest it is to think of setting up upon the stock of a little morality or outward decency of behaviour, while this accursed root of impiety remains in us!

When I am well, I think I could die contentedly; when I am sick, I am impatient to be well again.

Oh! how I wish utterly to disregard, and be unmoved at, the contempt, peevishness, and perverse opposition of others, and at the same time to pity the unhappy state of mind, and love the person it proceeds from. 'Arise, O God, and let thine enemies be scattered. Give me this proof of thy love to me, *and* power in me; this foretaste of the heavenly

ppiness; this earnest of thy Spirit in my heart; is blessed grace of charity, by which only I m know and be like thee, and be fitted to dwell ith thee in the regions of everlasting peace and ve.'

If any man, pretending to be humble, tells me that od has given him a sight of his own frightful ugli- ss, I can believe him; but not if he pretend to come y his humility in any other way.

I see enough in others for a ground in all to be mble: and yet this very thing prevents me from ing so. I cannot help comparing myself with them, stead of the rule of perfection.

I am perpetually looking out for some fitness in yself, some procuring meritorious cause of God's ceptance of me, as if I could never be safe till I uld challenge reward at his hands as a debt; and t I believe this is pure opposition to the gospel heme, and the very infidelity which St. Paul, in rticular, levels all his reasonings against, the more ngerous as being the more specious, and at all es the religion of the more sober and rational part mankind.

I plainly perceive that I am what I think hate- in others, and what I really hate and despise ers for.

There can be no repenting, asking forgiveness, or siring a change, upon a general confused appre- nsion of our unworthiness. We can only come to rist with a catalogue of our sins in our hands; d if the Holy Spirit does not assist in drawing it , we shall omit a hundred times more than we set wn.

Till we have a full belief and apprehension of the ripture doctrine of the remission of sins, we are der a kind of necessity of denying, extenuating, d explaining away the guilt of them; and this als us up in blindness, impenitence, and hardness heart.

If I acquiesce in the act of prayer, without desiring to receive what I ask for, I never pray.

We are apt to acquiesce in the bare act of prayer, and can be well enough content all our lives to go without the spiritual good things we pray for. The case is plain, we do not desire them.

I want to sink myself, in my own opinion, truly and sincerely below other people; and I verily believe that we can never have any clear sight and knowledge of ourselves and others, till we stand upon lower ground than we are naturally apt to do.

For a great part of my life, I did not know that I was poor, and naked, and blind, and miserable. I have known it for some time without feeling it. Thank God, I now begin to be pinched with it. Stand aside, pride, for a moment, and let me see that ugly thing—myself.

I know and can tell my sins to God, but to very little purpose, as to any real abhorrence or forsaking of them, unless he is pleased to tell them to me.

I believe the damnableness of sin in others, but not in myself.

Could I bear to be the author of a treatise which should be the means of enlightening and converting thousands, and be without the credit of it, or see it all given to another.

What I stick to as a test in point of duty or religious perfection, is this, Can I do it of myself? If I can, I conclude at once that it does not come up to what God requires of me.

I do not perceive that I have any real pity for the calamities of others. If they happen in an enemy's country, I rejoice at them, and wish they were greater. If this is not a diabolical temper, what is?

I can make a shift to cheat the world, but I can cheat myself no longer. The inward mask is taken off, at least in part, and I am uneasy till I see more of my own deformity.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,

&c. I had rather enter into the meaning of this saying, and be in full possession of the spirit of it, than be lord of the universe.

O my God, grant me not the turbulent feverish transports of a sickly fancy, not the swellings of enthusiastic pride; but freedom from the detested rule of passion, and the perpetual serenity of an humble, resigned, obedient frame of spirit!

I see and believe the reality and guilt of sin, in Christ hanging upon the cross, and am convinced with infallible certainty, that the scripture lays nothing to the charge of man's nature but what is true: but I cannot say that I feel and hate sin in myself in any great degree.

I discern clearly, that in all my dealings and conversation with others, I do not so much desire their salvation as esteem.

I see very distinctly, that the will and power in me which unites me with God, obeys and loves, is not from myself.

I find, upon strict scrutiny into myself, that I am not so much influenced by a sense of reputation as to deny a persecuted truth; nevertheless, I plainly perceive that, if I could be instrumental in spreading it, the great motive to it would not be love of the truth of Christ, or the souls of men, and that my chief pleasure would arise from the credit of it.

Little children have but one appetite, know what they want, and can be quieted with nothing else. Would to God I was so.

Oh! how many thousands, at this hour, are worshipping God in spirit and truth, and labouring to advance his kingdom! and I still stand idle, cold, and lifeless, tongue-tied and fearful, as fast bound to the world, and as averse to thorough work as ever!

It was not only Pontius Pilate and the Jews, but my sins, I myself, that condemned Christ, that scourged him, and spit upon him, that drove the nails into his hands and feet, and pierced his side,

and forced him to cry out, "My God! my God hast thou forsaken me?" He consented to once. What infinity of baseness then to cruc afresh!

God sometimes gives me a taste of what he for me, and takes it away again, to let me see cannot do for myself.

Is my retiring to converse with God a state joyment, or an earnest seeking to him in trou self-abasement, from a sense of the greates wants? or is it affectation, and a force upon proceeding from no real desire, producing nc or is it sometimes one, sometimes the other o and sometimes a mixture of all three?

It is a blessed prayer, 'O God, thou know I am in trouble, that I want thee, and des thing but thee, and must be for ever miserable thee!'

O! when shall I sit down to the rich f inward tranquillity, from a settled state of me lowliness, faithfulness to God, and independ every thing but him?

I begin to have an intimate sense of Goc sence, and to transact with him as near me. be God for it. May he continue and increase

Perhaps what I do see and acknowledge of is not the worst by far.

The evil which scripture lays to the charge kind, I feel in myself, and see plainly in otl see farther, that it is the root and essence of and that without a real vital change, it is imp I should ever be happy; and yet, notwiths this self-conviction, notwithstanding that sc tells me that the consequence of an unregener ture will be eternal separation from God, I do r ceive that it comes with full weight upon my

I have nothing to do, in my present circums with any man, sect, or opinion. I am sic dangerous distemper, and must not stand

books on the nature of diseases, but look out immediately for a cure; especially as I know of an infallible Physician.

Do I bring myself to the touchstone of truth, or make myself the touchstone?

Oh! if the world knew, or I myself knew, what God knows of me, how should I then appear?

It is cause enough for humility, to know that we are not humble.

I find that the chief ingredient of duty, the one steady invariable principle of true holiness, without which all I do is nothing, yea, no better than sin, has hitherto been much wanting, viz. a prevailing regard to the glory of God.

Many of our useful thoughts die away without doing their office; vanishing like bubbles almost as soon as they appear.

I know I cannot, and if I might I would not, be happy in any other way than by the love of God and his perfections, conformity to his will, desire to enjoy him, and assimilation to him in a will to all goodness. Yet I do not pay a sacred supreme regard to the will of God; I do not set it up as the mark I am aiming at in every thought, word, and action; nor embrace it steadily, instantly, cheerfully; nor live upon it as the food of my soul. I know why I am not happy.

My sins brought Christ to me, and me to Christ.

O weeping love, O praying love, O working love! but instead thereof, sloth, indifference, coldness, selfishness.

If God would leave me to my own choice, I know I should desire above all things to continue in his hands, and be wholly at his disposal.

I wear a mask to myself, and for my life cannot help fancying that I am what I would seem to be, and know I am not.

If any man was to entrust me with a sum for the

use of others, and I could secrete the whole or part of it without its being known, my conscience would not let me do it; I could never be guilty of such baseness. I am sensible that God does so put talents into my hands, and knows to a farthing what I give or keep back; and yet I am not so scrupulous and exact with regard to him, nor anxious to keep a just account. What can be the meaning of this? And why is conscience so unfeeling and false to its office, where he is concerned? I cannot fathom the depth of this thought; I cannot estimate my guilt; I stand amazed at my contempt of God, and shrink back from myself with horror.

Aged 63. I have made experiment what life is. The retrospect is very mortifying, and I should neither be able to bear up against it, nor endure the little time that is to come, without Jesus.

The dreadful and ever-memorable earthquake at Lisbon! It is man and not God, that throws nature into convulsions. O my soul, art thou an earth-shaker?

Every hour comes to us charged with duty, and the moment it is past, returns to heaven to register itself, how spent. My hours how trifled, sauntered, dozed, sensualized, sinned away!

I should be sorry to have it known what I am, how little I know, and what I have been doing in the world; and yet I am sure I swell with self-conceit, long for and expect applause, and catch greedily at it, where I know it is falsely given.—Horrid depravity and meanness of soul.

It is hard to sit down in the lowest room; not because I am bidden, or to save appearances, but because I know it to be my place.

I do not think of myself according to what I know of myself.

Would I choose that God should take me out of the world, to rescue me from a temptation which he *sees* would be too hard for me, and to prevent my

falling into sin? If not, I am either fearless of sin, or immoderately fond of life, or both.

I am horribly proud without ground or pretence, and with great cause for humiliation. I know this, and still I am horribly proud.

I see in other sinners what I am; in Jesus, what I should be.

I am checked in sin, because soon to pray, and for the ease of my own mind in the duty, more than from any pure principle, or steady sacred regard to God.

I have just enough to keep a sickly hope alive, but not the sense and enjoyment of spiritual health.

I can forgive others more easily than myself. But, query, whether this is not rather the effect of pride, to find I am no better, than real humiliation. For true compunction, repentance towards God by a work of the Spirit, is for sin as sin, and for all sin, secret as well as open. I have reason to think that I grieve and feel much more for sin which is seen and observed, than for a greater which is not.

I should not care if all the world saw my sin, if I could be sure that God did not. And why do I dread his knowledge of me? Not so much from a genuine concern for having offended so gracious and good a Being, as fear of his punishment.

Whatever graces I pray for, whatever good I do, is too much with a view to self, for the ease and satisfaction of my mind, for reputation, to preserve my own good opinion, with too little regard to the glory of God, and the benefit of others.

If I had been less a sinner, I should probably have known less of Christ, and of my obligation to him, than I do; and without the knowledge of Christ saving me from the curse and ruin of my sin, I am sure I should have been less concerned for it, and afraid of it, than I am.

I never was thankful, as I ought, for the common blessings of providence, for health and abundance;

and, behold! I am thankful for pain, and think I could be so in want. Whose work is this?

I see the devil's hook, and yet cannot help nibbling at the bait.

I can be courteous, humane, beneficent, and abstain from outward sin with hard struggling; but who shall make me humble, charitable, and pure in heart?

I believe I am not what I should be, I believe I shall be what I am not; I believe in the power of God, I believe in my own weakness.

Inactive and silent for fear of giving offence, for ease and quiet; for want of love and real concern for the spiritual good of others; and all from a root of unbelief.

The evil which I know and feel in myself, though not denied, causes no suitable dislike or self-abhorrence; what I see or suppose to be in others, I am too apt heartily to despise them for. What blindness, pride, and malevolence!

I can say truly, I have great need of Christ; thank God, I can say boldly, I have a great Christ for my need.

The world in my heart is a worse distemper than any that Christ cured.

What shall I do to live one day without sin?

Four things are a grief of heart to me: that I do not love God more, nor hate sin more, nor abhor myself more, and that the world generally thinks so much better of me, as a Christian, than I deserve.

"Mortify your members." I have not had this end sufficiently in view, and hardly ever thought duly of any such thing.

At the age of sixty, I thought it humility enough to confess myself a threescore years' old sinner! little imagining that I must say the same if I lived to be fourscore.

Much forgiven, and little love; how is it?

Is there any thing in my heart or life displeasing to God? The question must be answered.

I am continually looking for the substantial ground, and adequate meritorious cause of justification in myself, whereas it is solely in Christ; and though I am answerable to him for the gratitude, fidelity, and loyalty of a pure heart, it is not the cause, but the effect and consequence of my salvation by him.

Jan. 23, 1765. It was evident to me, that for a worldly advantage I could and would do and forbear what I do not for God and heaven.

Feb. 15, 1765. Is there, is there, O my soul, a call this day to God, to his obedience, to purity of heart, to love, to an humble hope of being owned by him, and living with him for ever?—There is.

If I knew that Christ died for me only, it would not kindle in me one spark of love without a divine operation on my soul. I have sufficient obligations to him, acknowledge the debt, and would fain pay some part of it from a feeling of gratitude, but find my heart is cold as a stone.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." So I said, for one whole night and day, and thought I should never lose the experience; but at the same time, the song of Moses for deliverance at the Red Sea was presented to my mind: "In three days they came to Marah." In one day it was Marah with me: all was gone.

Christ has removed the burden of sin from my conscience a thousand times; and as often as he takes it off, I lay it on again.

Read and pray, think and pray, pray and fear not. Lord God, thou knowest my prayer is for mercy, and strength to keep mercy; to believe and rejoice; to believe and adore; to believe and love; to believe and have no will but to please thee; to believe and die to the world; and thou knowest that I prostrate

myself before thee, as a sinful, helpless creature: placing no confidence in my own strength, attainments, willing, or running, but trusting wholly in thy grace and power for the pardon of all my sins, and the supply of all my wants.

God help me! I am so foolish as to expect happiness, with a great remainder of sin about me, if not all I was born with.

So long as there is one speck of sin remaining, perfect happiness is impossible.

Well may I, who am so poor in love and peaceableness, polluted in heart, destitute of holy zeal, be required to be poor in spirit, to mourn, to be meek, to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

A call was given me from the Spirit to see sin in all its guilt, malignity, and curse, truly to abhor it, to have my very soul bent against it, and to dread it more than death.

No slave in Turkey ever wished for deliverance more than I do for Christ's freedom.

Oh! how happy should I be, what cause of rejoicing, what ground of adoration and thankfulness shall I have, when I perceive as clearly within myself that the love of God is uppermost in my heart, and takes place of all other loves, as I do that I love myself above any thing in the world.

I like Christ's work so well, that I do not care how long I live to do it, nor how soon I die, that I may know and serve him better.

If I do not devote myself to the obedience of God with full purpose of heart, and a steady, sole regard to his will, no number of acts, religious or moral, will recommend me to his favour; my whole life is sin.

Let others boast of self-power and despise help, I have great need to pray.

Aug. 13, 1765, I had, for many hours, a strong lightsome, and overpowering sense of joy, without any preceding cause of reading, thought, meditation,

ı of any kind, to be the ground of it; but
/self, all on a sudden drawn to God, laid at
emer's feet in faith, admiration, and thank-
desiring to be led by the Spirit, and making
ns of love and obedience. I know such
are not to be lived upon, nor proofs of a
te of spirituality. Supposing them to be
.xes of the Spirit, they are to be considered
to greater sincerity, circumspection, and
ess, if not forerunners of trial and sufferings.
ld be better contented to be what I am,
ıelpless creature, if my pride would let me.
r was thrifty for myself; and if I had, I
ave been covetous. Thrift for God shall
hought of, and that will make me generous
as air.
h I have one foot in the grave, and am sen-
t the world has left me, yet I do not find that
eft it; but still delude myself with a vain
some kind of enjoyment from it, and remain
ı under the power of sensuality.
ather be cast into the burning fiery furnace,
ın's den, than suffer sin to lie quietly in my

ɔt know the person whose good opinion I do
:ally love more than their soul.
a full conviction that I stand more in awe of
ın of God.
ı conscience enough to make me uneasy in
ıot enough to keep me from it.
case of others, I am apt to be angry with
ır, and not the sin; in my own, with the sin
but not the sinner.
strict and scrupulous in matters which do
h thwart my will, nor bear too hard upon
. blood. So pride thrives, and conscience is
n being overtroublesome.
ften thinking whether I renounce sin upon
unds. Do I renounce it upon any?

The world may well excuse me for wearing a mask to hide my guiltiness from it. I put the same cheat full as much upon myself, and am still in the attempt of painting and whitewashing to God.

The world says of me, 'A good sort of man, but a little too strict and precise.' My real character is rather, "He has not the fear of God before his eyes, neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil."

I can see nothing without the Spirit's eyes, but as it were in a mist. I am fully persuaded of the truth of scripture, and what it tells me of sin, myself, God, Christ, and eternity; but with little more effect and true feeling than what I know and believe of some remote country, in which I have no manner of concern.

If things and providences are not according to my mind, I can dissemble; but do what I will, cannot be pleased. Let the thought of my being displeased with God be ever so hard, it is better to know it.

I can truly say of every one I know, I hope they are better than myself.

I am continually looking at the clouds, to know whether I should be pleased with God.

You tell me that the remembrance of sin should be accompanied with self-loathing, and a childlike ingenuous concern for having displeased God, rather than a slavish dread of punishment. I see the reason and excellence of such godly sorrow, but plainly perceive, that if I were secure from all fear of punishment for my sins, I could be easily reconciled to myself for having committed them. Since this is the case with me, I have great cause to be thankful that I am not hidden from myself; and I am sure there is no other way of putting things upon a better footing with my soul, than knowing what I am. The Lord keep me close to this prayer in all sincerity: "Try me, O God, and search the ground of my heart."

Sin is still strong, with the grave opening, and ready to close upon me.

I could tear my heart out for not being God's; I have been deceived all my life by sayings of philosophers, scraps of verses, and most of all by the pride of my own heart, into an opinion of self-power, which the scripture plainly tells me, and I find by repeated fruitless efforts, that I have not.

I have great cause to be sorry and ashamed, that any who have a much less income than myself should be more contented, or that any who have more pains and sufferings should bear them better.

I have sinned enough, and long enough; and though I would give the world to sin no more, I dare not say I shall not.

I think so much of what others should do, that I cannot find time to bestow one thought of that kind on myself.

If the devil could take Christ from me, I should be ready for any wickedness.

The more I am terrified with a sight and sense of sin, the more precious Christ is, and the faster I lay hold on him.

My apprehension of sin is faint, and chiefly speculative. If I had a true sense and feeling of it, I should be much more pained with it than I am with the stone, and gladly submit to any method of cure.

My death will be no more regarded by the world than that of a worm or fly; but it is of infinite consequence to me.

If I could make myself patient, resigned, and thankful, I had rather that God should do it, as it would be a token and proof of his love and favourable presence with me.

If I felt for the disorder and danger of my soul, as I do for my body in pain and sickness, I should look out every way for help; be a thousand times more anxious for its recovery than I am; submit to any

method of cure, and say unfeignedly to God, '*Ure, feri, seca;*' that is, Burn, strike, cut.

Whenever I do any good, instead of applauding myself, or supposing that Christ will place it to my account in a way of merit, I should consider what more I might have done, and have not.

When I am well, I think I can put myself into the hands of God, and be content to be at his disposal; when pains come, I had rather choose for myself, and am impatient to be at ease.

If a person whom I esteemed and loved, and absolutely depended on for my support and happiness, were to prescribe a rule of conduct to me, I should conform to it with pleasure, and hardly ever deviate from it, especially if I knew he had his eye always upon me. Why then am I not so affected towards God, but because I value his favour less, or stand less in awe of him, or judge the performance of his commands to be impossible, or trust unwarrantably in his mercy, and all from a prevalent corruption of heart and nature?

Lord, forgive my sins, and suffer me to keep them. Is this the meaning of my prayers?

I fly from myself to God; I appeal from myself to Christ.

How sad to find reason say, I see God in every thing but myself?

I see and own my obligations to Christ, but have not nearly so lively a sense of them as I have of much inferior kindnesses received from another hand. Perhaps the reason may be, partly that I consider his benefits as necessary emanations of divine goodness; partly, because he requires things which seem hard to me,—taking up the cross, forsaking all, mortification of self, a change of nature and will—and this damps my gratitude to him, though in all reason it should increase it.

As earthly, sensual, devilish as ever, and worse than my former self, by an accursed hypocrisy.

Son of David, have mercy upon me, and heal my soul.

All I do is for self; reading, meditating, composing, all terminate in self-gratification, with hardly any view to usefulness or general benefit.

If it were put to my choice, whether I would go immediately to heaven, or stay longer in this world, I should choose the former; but then I believe it would be rather to avoid being thought a fool, and to be rid of the vexations I meet with here, than in love to Christ, and desire of the company and delights of heaven.

I find it very difficult to conceive how God can show mercy to me, without showing it to all.

I should think myself undone, if I might not pray.

The will of God is so dear and sacred to me, as his will, in the love of God and with a sincere desire to please him, that I would not oppose it if he were not present or privy to my disobedience, or I knew certainly that he would not inflict any punishment upon me for it.

I do acts of love without love. I do not perceive it to be a nature in me; and I am sure that if ever I am possessed of it, it must be by a supernatural change. Here is work for prayer.

Come, my heart, draw nigh to God for remission and renovation, with fulness of desire for a full work; come now, this moment, as also to Jesus, for all his cleansing, for washing in his blood, for love, for fidelity. Deliver thyself into his hands, and beg of him to purge this floor in thee, and make thee pure wheat, fit for his garner. And O Spirit of holiness, do thou bring me, in repentance and faith, to the blood of sprinkling. Sanctify my spirit, soul, and body, and baptize me with thy fire unto obedience and love of the truth.

I puzzle myself about the prophecies, especially the Apocalypse, and am often prying into futurity,

but do not advert enough to what I may certainly know without a prophecy, what and where I shall be within a few years at the most, if I suffer sin to keep possession of me; if I do not abhor and cast it from me in the fear of God; if I do not pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand; if I do not humble myself deeply before God; cry earnestly for mercy, and yield myself to him unfeignedly, and with the utmost sincerity of intention, for newness of heart and spirit.

I want forgiveness of one sin, and strength against it; but God wants to do more for me, and will forgive and deliver me from none till I make further search into myself, and bring my sins before him altogether.

God hears my prayers for deliverance from one sin, by holding me under it till I discover more, and am led to the root of all sin in an evil heart and evil nature.

I cannot work repentance in myself. I cannot purify my heart, I cannot change my nature.

"The blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel;" crieth louder in the ears of God for mercy to mankind, than that of Abel did against Cain for vengeance. Why does it not cry as loud in my ears, and in the depth of my heart, for gratitude, for love, for faithful and true allegiance, for zeal and fidelity in the service of my Lord, for obedience to every command, and to all that is written in his book? Lord Jesus, thou knowest that can only be in a day of power, when thou sayest, "Ephphatha," and speakest thyself into my heart. O speak; come quickly to a sinner bound hand and foot, and lying at the point of death.

My prayers can only be answered in the way of a severe mortification, and I would have the business done without.

It was suggested to my heart and conscience, as by a heavenly voice, that God's command is for an

absolute immediate renunciation of sin, and a perpetual, full obedience, and that every thing short of such a purpose is prevarication, rebellion, misery, death.

The shame and disgrace of a certain error in life, though unattended with guilt, gives me more sensible compunction and sorrow of heart than all the sins I ever committed. I feel in this instance how I should be affected towards God on account of sin, and am not. That error seizing upon the mind as irretrievable is a resemblance of hell, and with the blessing of God, may be the means of keeping me out of it, by leading me to consider what other errors may be retrievable.

Shut up in self, like a toad in a hole, and as full of venom.

It is my own fault if I do not profit by the defects of others, by taking occasion from them to prove and exercise my own virtue. The question should be, What kind of sentiment or behaviour does the case require?

What has the day done for me? Has it set me nearer heaven? Has it brought in an increase of knowledge and virtue? Has it been devoted to the service of God and man, or spent in sensuality and self-pleasing?

I am grievously offended with my parishioners, because they will not contribute to my reputation in the world, by being converted by me. Lord, let thy Spirit go with me into the depth of my heart, to show me more and more of its deceit and desperate wickedness.

I plainly perceive that I have horribly abused gospel-grace, if not to an allowance of sin, yet to make me less fearful of it, and keep off the Spirit's reproof.

In all the good I do, I have little thought but of pleasing and enjoying myself. The inquiry is, How I shall find my account in such an action or

course of life, in respect of ease and self-satisfaction! and if duty will not pay me something in hand, it is a hundred to one I baulk it. The point should be, not what will please myself, but God. The time and manner of enjoyment may be left to him. It appears also from hence, that the supposing virtue to be its own reward, is destructive of Christian hope; and not the way to secure the interests of virtue, but an unsteady, fallacious principle of action, which would oftener lead us from what is right, than to it.

I shall never think I live, till I desire to live no longer.

Some fix their eyes so much upon the atonement of the cross, as to be blind to the example of it; others so much upon the example, as to undervalue the atonement of it. It is a happy art and the Christian's work, to avoid both extremes. For my own part, I find I am more willing that Christ should take me unto himself for the communication of his benefits, than I am to take him into my heart with his pure commands, strict discipline, self-denial, and suffering spirit.

If proclaiming my life before men and angels, will be proclaiming the glory of saving grace, let it be done. I do not desire to have one sinful act, word, or thought concealed. Forgiveness through the blood of Christ, will be to myself an endless spring of admiration, love, and thanksgiving; and the blessed company of heaven will join with me in praising God and the Lamb for it to all eternity.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURES.

MED I saw Christ curing a distempered per-
[immediately applied to him for my own
. He asked, In what respect? I answered,
it spiritual healing and forgiveness of sins.'
med to doubt whether I truly desired it. I
on my knees and besought him earnestly; on
he said, with a gracious look, "Thy sins are
n thee; go and sin no more." I was trans-
at the words, and wept tears of joy in great
nce. My reflection on waking was, that I
full assurance from the word of God of the
on of sins, and as plain a command to sin no
is if it were spoken to me by a voice from
or by Christ himself in person. "If they
t Moses and the prophets, neither will they
uaded though one rose from the dead."
ustin, in his confessions, b. xii. cap. 26, de-
imself to this purpose; 'If I had been en-
by God to write the book of Genesis, I should
iosen to have composed it in such a manner
th and eloquence, that they who did not un-
d creation, should nevertheless not be able
t it for being above their capacity; and that
er different truths any man, or number of men,
discover, or have discovered to them, should
ained in the conciseness of the text.' This

shows a vast reach of thought in St. Austin, and opens to us an amazing extent of truth in Scripture, and seems to have been his real opinion of the book of Genesis.

The Scripture is light and truth from God; a clue put into my hands by him, to guide me through the mazes of darkness and error; the instrument he works with in the destruction of sin and purification of my nature; and if I do but receive it as such, I am sure he will bless it to me in such ways as he knows to be best for me. My only prayer to the Father of mercies and God of all consolation is, that he would give me a full conviction and certain apprehension of my faith, and sincerity in the use of it; and all the rest, the measure of illumination, sensible comforts, and worldly accommodations, I leave cheerfully to him.

Some people lie at catch with Scripture, for examples or expressions to countenance their corruption.

The design of the Christian religion is to change men's views, lives, and tempers. But how?—by the superior excellence of its precepts? by the weight of its exhortations, or the promise of its rewards? No; but by convincing men of their wretched guilt, blindness, and impotence; by inculcating the necessity of remission, supernatural light and assistance, and actually promising and conveying these blessings. And if it does not prove its divinity by its efficacy, let it be condemned as an imposture. This was one of its most operative, convincing proofs at the beginning, and certainly is its greatest abiding proof.

The Scripture sends me to my heart; and my heart, well-known and considered, sends me back again to the Scripture, with great advantage for the understanding of it.

It may be a dangerous snare to me, and I may go mourning all my life long, if I expect any thing from God that he has never promised.

Eve was sadly mistaken in Cain, when she said he had gotten the man Jehovah, the promised seed, and had got no better than a murderer. Perhaps this is a common mistake; and men think they have Christ, when they have nothing in them but the spirit of Cain.

If we heard a voice from heaven, it would reveal a new Scripture to us; it would send us to the law and the testimony. Why then should we not adhere to the word, and make a diligent use of it without? We should, if we believed it.

The religion of most men is fixed from nature; that is, worldly ease and convenience before they come to the reading of the Scripture. The consequence is plain—in all points where it exceeds their standard, it will be pared away.

With what a mixture of fear, reverence, and holy joy, should we open the Bible! the book of truth and happiness! God's heart opened to man! and yet the whole and every part of it secreted from him, and hid under an impenetrable veil, till he opens his heart to God.

Before the coming of Christ, the law and the Gospel were in one, but the latter so hid under the former, that it was matter of some difficulty to discern it. After his coming, the Gospel-part of the law was taken out of it, and separated from it, and by being placed apart, in a conspicuous point of view, reflected back its own lustre upon the law, discovered plainly that it was in it, and gave it a strength and vigour which it never had before.

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;" consequently the wisdom of God is foolishness with man. The consequence of both is plain—all who adhere to divine wisdom and illumination, must necessarily be fools in the eye of the world.

The Scripture is unto us what the star was to the wise men; but if we spend all our time in gazing upon it, observing its motions, and admiring its

splendour, without being led to Christ by it, the use of it will be lost to us.

Perhaps it may be a good rule in the reading of Scripture, not to run from one passage to another, or suppose it a duty to read a certain portion of it every day, but to dwell upon particular passages, till they have in some measure done their office.

Every one should apply Scripture to himself, as if it were written for him only.

Scripture-reading is a feast indeed, when we find in ourselves a disposition to receive it in truth and simplicity.

"Son of man, can these dry bones live? Lord God, thou knowest." Show me a thought so interesting, so profound, so impressive, and so well expressed, in a pagan author.

Poison secretly conveyed into an antidote must be fatal, because no further cure will be looked for. How many themselves poison their great antidote, the Bible!

Look full at Scripture, especially the beatitudes; do not be afraid of it, it is a sovereign cure for a sick soul; but then it must not be adulterated, as it is, with the spurious mixtures of human reason.

We go to commentators for the most part, because we are afraid to take Christ and his apostles upon their own word. If we had a simple faith, we should seldom want others to explain their meaning.

It is an awful, dreadful thing, to come full into the light of Scripture, and be upon a foot of sincerity with God.

Our spiritual progress is greatly hindered by running from one thing to another. When any thought, discovery, or passage of Scripture, makes a strong impression, and, as it were, seizes upon the mind, consider it as of God, and give it time and opportunity to work its effect, by excluding every thing else for a season. It would be of infinite use to keep an exact history of such inward workings, their rise,

ntinuance, declension, and revival; and the com-
nication and comparison of many such histories
ould not only afford matter of curious knowledge,
eat improvement, and mutual comfort, but perhaps
one of the strongest evidences of Christ's mission,
d the truth of the Scripture.

The Scriptures are so darkened with expositions,
d buried under such a heap of rubbish, that it is
kind of labour even for the Spirit of God to re-
ove it. The minds of the poor not being sophis-
cated by the false glosses which obscure the plain
nse of Scripture, are in a much better condition
r understanding it than the learned.

It is no objection to the truth of Scripture, that
many different sects find their own opinions in it;
r, first, if they were all agreed in their sense of it,
d submission to it, the testimony it brings against
e blindness and corruption of mankind would be
eakened: secondly, it is no disparagement to a
oking-glass, that all see something in it that is
leasing to themselves; the glass is true, the eye is
artial.

It is said of Socrates, that when he believed he
as divinely admonished to do any thing, it was
npossible to make him take a contrary resolution.
ow does his example shame those who pretend to
ceive and believe the Scripture as a divine direc-
on, and yet for the most part trample it under their
et!

It is the great design of the Scripture to teach the
st to despair of being self-saved; the worst not
despair of being saved by Christ; and to offer to
ll the help they want.

The Scripture was written to be transcribed into
e heart, and it has its effect when the heart is
such full consent and agreement therewith, that
e Scripture might have been copied from it.

It is impossible, in the nature of things, that so
rdensome and expensive an institution as that

of Moses, should ever have been received by the Jews, but upon sufficient evidence of its being divine. *See Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* vol. 2. c. i. p. 116.

The design of revelation is to inform mankind that they are in a state of ruin, and under the divine displeasure by reason of sin, and to propose the means of their recovery to the favour of God, and the hope of eternal life, by faith in a Redeemer, and submission to his teaching and authority.

Setting aside St. Paul, I should think Mr. Law right in his notion of regeneration; but when I look into the Scriptures, I am sure he is wrong.

Many assent to the truth of Scripture, and make use of it to paint their faces, but will not suffer it to get within them, nor come too near the heart.

How can I be discontented or low-spirited, want employment or enjoyment, when I have the Scripture to go to?

I have the writings of a most invaluable estate in my hands, made over to me as my own property; and whenever I open the New Testament, and think of the unsearchable riches of Christ therein conveyed to every believer, I may look down with contempt on all earthly possessions, and deserve to forfeit my interest in the gospel-treasure, if I do not.

There is but one kind of happiness in nature for intelligent creatures, viz. that by which God is happy. God is happy in his own will; therefore intelligent creatures can only be happy by their knowledge of, and conformity to, that will. The question, Where is this knowledge to be had? is easily answered; and the necessity of a revelation for this purpose, together with the helps it offers for bringing mankind to that conformity, appears at once.

CHAPTER III.

GOD.

ALL spiritual happiness is in God and inseparable from him, and there is no possibility of the creature's receiving any but by being in him. The gospel only teaches the necessity of this union, and the precious means and mystery of it by Christ.

The mercy of God is the first article of every man's creed; but the different manner of understanding and applying it, makes an essential, infinite difference in the characters of men, and constitutes either religion or atheism.

I believe the universal immediate presence of God; that he is the foundation, life, and essence, of all creation and of every part and particle of it; or, in St. Paul's words, that "he is above all, and through all, and in all;" but still he is absent, and infinitely removed from me, unless I find him in my own heart. The greatest knowledge of his being and attributes will avail me nothing, if I do not also know him as my Father, in Christ; and as such, favouring, loving, and blessing me, in time and to all eternity.

I do not think it is in the power of God to make any thing to be our happiness but himself.

The mercies of God, refused, aggravate guilt and draw on great ruin; but what then? Must not God

therefore make a tender of his mercy? and must none be the better for it, because some will be the worse?

Nothing but love can unite with and enjoy love. The nature of God must be in us, before it can be a good to us.

All glory is so properly and solely God's, that none can belong to any other; and whatever creature, man or angel, takes any to itself, in so doing, it discovers the nature, and falls into the condemnation, of the devil.

What do I ask of God? happiness confusedly? or himself as the only ground of it?

No rational creature can be truly happy in the enjoyment of any thing, so long as there is any thing better to be enjoyed. This thought, if true, leads directly to God.

The will of God is God; and to love one without the other is impossible.

If we look at our fellow-creatures only, we shall find or take but too many occasions of pride and self-exaltation.

The way to be humble is to look upwards to God. If we think greatly of his majesty, purity, and infinity of all excellence, it will give us such a striking view of our vileness and absolute unworthiness, that we shall think it hardly possible for any to be lower than ourselves.

The angels are swallowed up in the will of God, as their centre of rest and full enjoyment, and have not one thought out of or beyond it. If they should give their wills unto any thing else, but for a moment, they would lose their name, nature, and happiness.

Though God reveals his own character in his word, he reserves to himself the revelation of it to us by his word. Whenever he discovers himself effectually and savingly, the heart knows it is he, and not the mere word that has done it.

long to know more of that Being who made the
ld, and to whom I have so many obligations.
: is easy to say, blessed be God in every thing;
where is the man that is always pleased with God?
low happy should we be, if we loved God but a
e.
here is no possibility of happiness but in the will
od, and in the discovery of it as his goodness to
ıkind, and the only way in which he can com-
ıicate it.
God and enough,' says B. The reason why we
er have enough, or know not what we would
e, is because we neither have nor desire to have
l.
f we had self-power, or could be self-saved, we
uld be gods to ourselves: and therefore God, for
own glory, and to preserve us from this cursed
atry, keeps all power in his own hands.
Vith us, commonly, sin is no sooner past than
otten. To God it is alike present at all times,
he always sees us in the very act of what we
fifty years ago.
hose who do not choose to be like God, will
ainly make God like themselves, as regardless
in, and as little concerned to punish it, as they
ık he should be.
od has made the only thing which constitutes
happiness, resignation to and love of his will,
mon to all.
Forgive me all my sin:'—an unreasonable and
meful petition to any but God: for though all
is infinitely aggravated by being against God, yet
only hope of sinners is, that it is against God.
Ve dishonour God greatly, and deny his nature,
not expecting great things from him.
od keeps us from much evil by the secret methods
his providence, or prudential considerations re-
cting our worldly interest or convenience, while
ıs there is no *sanctification*.

God sometimes suffers the temptation to be very great, as in the case of Adam and Eve, and the prophet, 1 Kings xiii.; but his command is sacred, and the consequence of breaking it is terrible.

God's punishments and favours, though delayed, are as certain in his own time and manner, as his eternal, unchangeable justice and goodness.

The highest angels know that they are kept in being, and supported every moment in their state of rectitude, by the will and power of God; and this sense of their dependence is their glory, perfection, happiness, song of praise, and the ground of their love and adoration.

God manifests himself in all his works, benefits, and blessings, and hides himself again in his providential crosses and afflictions, and the pains and sorrows of life. All is just as it should be: he tells us as plainly that we were not made for a happiness in this world, as he does that he made and governs it.

It is hard to say whether God manifests or hides himself more.

If God would give me all in heaven and earth, without himself, I should be extremely and for ever miserable.

I am bound to thank God for my being, for the continuance and support of my life, and for innumerable benefits respecting this world; but most of all for making me capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him; calling me to this happiness, and qualifying me for it.

God is my Maker, Preserver, Redeemer, Sanctifier. Do I delight to consider him under these characters?

If I were to be assured that there is no God, or that he does not govern the world, nor regard what is doing in it, nor hear prayer, nor promise immortality and prepare us for it, how would it affect me? Should I think myself undone, as being deprived of all my hopes and comforts, my best friend, and the dearest object of my heart.

God is my end, Christ is my way, the Spirit my guide.

God has the same knowledge, inspection, and care of every one, as if there were but one.

It is my duty to keep myself at an awful distance from God's natural attributes, and to approach as nearly as possible to his moral.

God gives his help not by forcing, but secretly inclining and changing the will, and bringing it with freedom and full consent to a conformity with his own.

If I pleased God, I am sure he would please me.

I shall be a happy man when I cannot please myself without pleasing God.

He is God to govern his own world, and not I.

What God commands or ordains, is both the work and enjoyment of the day.

God is happy in his own will, and makes it known to us that we may be happy in it too.

If I am not happy in the will of God, I can be happy in nothing else; I shall be emphatically cursed with my own.

Instead of stretching our thoughts to the mystery of creation, and soaring above the stars when we think of God, which for the most part is setting him at a distance from us, it may be of great use to consider him as present in the room or little spot where we are, and, as it were, circumscribed within it, in all his glory, majesty, and purity.

I need not envy any man his station, or wish for a better spot on earth than where I am to find God in; he is found only in the heart; and in the heart, every where and wherever he is found, he makes a paradise.

It is the will of God that we should put him on doing moral impossibilities; and till we do, we neither know God nor ourselves.

Men judge of us by our actions. God by our motives.

How can we complain or think hardly of God for

any thing he does, or have the least doubt of his goodness, when he has given his Son to die for us!

God is no where to me, if he is not in my heart.

God denies us nothing, but with a design to give us something better. If he forbids a lust, it is to give himself. O wretched man, that ever the heart should be so blind, so hard, so long in choosing.

My greatest obligation to God, next to the gift of Jesus Christ and his Spirit, is for commanding me to love him with all my heart.

Thank God for his restraint; thank God for laying it on my heart; thank God for the gospel motives and help to do his will.

Certainly God had some farther design in giving me my life, and preserving it by continual miracles within and without, than that I should eat, drink, and die.

If I could help myself, I should choose to have God to do it. What less can be a ground of trust, dread, love?

What is rebellion in the state, to rebellion against God?

We ourselves stint God in the measure of spiritual gifts. He has no measure.

I have always known that my happiness is in God's power, but I did not consider enough that he himself is that happiness.

God takes the same care of me, and I ought to have the same regard to him, as if there were no other being in nature but him and myself.

He who sends the storm, steers the vessel.

All creation, and every part of it, is, more or less (and perhaps originally more than now,) a copy or resemblance of God, a manifestation of his nature and operations, the instrument of his goodness, the executioner of his justice, or a monitor of man's duty. The degenerate creature man, in his present capability of the divine likeness; the several tribes of brutes, in their formation, qualities, acts, and in-

stincts; the inanimate parts of the creation, in their attractions, processes, and offices,—all are something, and speak something of God, in the universal language of nature. The sun, for instance, to say nothing of its nature as fire, is a lively emblem of God's universal, operative presence. And our Saviour's saying, "How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!" is an affecting illustration of the divine στοργη and his own yearning compassion, in the fond workings of that creature. But who, in this dark state of things, can trace the thought in its full extent, or discover the resemblances, ends, and uses of but a few particulars? This will be the delightful employment of glorified spirits, and the growing wonder of eternity.

How is it possible for God to make an intelligent creature to receive its happiness from any thing but himself, since this would not only be giving his glory to another, but in some sort an annihilation of himself? For whatever constitutes or confers our happiness, will, in the reason of the thing, be our god, and we cannot be persuaded to place our desires, or pay our homage, any where else.

God offers himself in Christ to be our portion, possession, and happiness; and the man who can be contented with anything less, is neither worthy to receive him, nor qualified to enjoy him.

When I consider the God who fills heaven and earth, as intimately present with, and, as it were, circumscribed within my heart, I am seized with dread and astonishment. I dare not lie to him, nor prevaricate with him. I am afraid to speak, or even almost to think before him.

It is better to believe the goodness of God, notwithstanding the untowardness of some appearances in the state and nature of man, than to deny those appearances to be what they are, on a supposition that they are not to be reconciled with the goodness of God.

CHAPTER IV.

HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

WHO is there almost that does not wish God was less pure in his nature, less strict in his commands, less exact in his justice, less terrible in his vengeance, than he is? And is not this wishing that he were what he is not, and disliking what he is? And what is this, if the soul dare speak out the horrid truth, but even hating God?

Nothing in nature is more unknown to man than himself.

There are few men on earth so despised, disregarded, and forgotten, as God is by the generality of men.

"The peace of God passeth all understanding;" and yet when a few simple souls stand out, declaring boldly that they have it, but cannot explain it, all the rest of the world cries out on them for fools and enthusiasts.

It is the common opinion with regard to natural evil, that it is sufficiently accounted for, if happiness prevails on the whole; that this mixed state of things is unavoidable, and therefore no impeachment of the goodness of God; and that no man or number of men, however miserable, have any right to complain, if happiness is the result of the general system. I do not understand this: it seems to me little less than blasphemy. How is it possible for so much as one

conscious being to be miserable, but by its own fault?

If a man is a sinner, why does he not believe it? And if he is not, why does he confess it? What a strange jumble of blindness and hypocrisy! We confess what we do not really believe, and yet really are what we confess.

We aggravate the faults of others, to have a pretence for hating or despising them, and for the pleasure of self-comparison.

Striving against nature is like holding a weathercock with one's hand: as soon as the force is taken off, it veers again with the wind.

Whoever thinks he can acquit himself to God, has wrong notions of God, of himself, of duty, of sin. Either he considers God only under the single idea of mercy, or he knows nothing of his own great corruption, or contracts duty into a narrow compass, or fixes the guilt of sin at a low rate.

The happiest and most envied life, taken from childhood to old age, will not bear a review. There is not a year, perhaps not a month, perhaps not an hour of it, which a wise man would choose to live over again.

All our happiness as mere men, consists in forgetting ourselves. If we think, we are miserable.

A conscious, reflecting being, eagerly coveting happiness, and seeking it every where but in God, is the monster of the universe. God could no more make such a creature than he can unmake himself.

We are as vain as if we were in full possession of our original perfection; and our being vain is a certain proof that we are not.

An impatient desire to know and have more than is proper for us in our present state, often hinders us from using what we have, and knowing what we might; and is to many a source of great delusion.

The heart of man pants everlastingly after distinction; and our pride only changes its appearance.

Mine, I find, is grown to a goodly size, under the show of humility.

God may say to every self-righteous man, as he did in the case of Sodom, "Show me ten; yea, one perfect good action, and, for the sake of it I will not destroy."

The sour fruit that Adam ate, will be ever and anon rising in our stomachs, even in our best estate.

So long as we think we are what we are not, and have what we have not, we can receive nothing at the hands of God, and reformation is impossible.

We can no more bear to be told of our faults by God than man; and if we durst think it, are in reality as much disgusted at the one as the other.

What is the reason of the frequent uneasiness betwixt man and wife, and of their sometimes giving full scope to their passions on very trifling occasions; even amongst persons who behave with decency, calmness, and general good temper to all others? It is because they think their reputation safe in each other's hands, and therefore are not afraid to discover their natural sourness and malignity. This shows that neither love of rectitude, nor the fear of God, is at the bottom of that poor thing we call virtue, since we exert it least where it is most due, and where it would be most serviceable to ourselves, only because we think we can do so without disgrace.

The boasted demonstration of a future state of rewards and punishments, from the unequal distribution of things in this life, is annihilated on the Christian scheme, which supposes all to be sinners, and, as such, liable to condemnation; and, therefore, whatever good we receive from God, in any period of our existence, is grace, and not retribution.

Charity does not oblige us to think any man good, because Christ says, "there is none good."

Observe man's depravity in his punishment. In our present condition we can relish earthly things only, and they all conspire to disappoint our expec-

tations. There must therefore of necessity be a change both in the faculty and the object, if ever we are happy: and our business here, is not to accumulate riches, or fly from the sight of ourselves to amusements, but to acquire a true taste for things that are excellent.

Words cannot express the tormenting consciousness of a soul separated from the gracious influxes of God, and abandoned for ever to its own poverty and impotence.

If we sought after truth out of pure love to it, and for the pleasure of it, as is pretended, we should not fear the great teacher, Death, as we do.

Nothing shows the vanity of wealth, grandeur, and pleasure, in so strong a light as the restless, ambitious spirit of princes. What do they want? and what would they have? Alas! the soul, conscious to itself of much higher pretensions, is not to be quieted with any thing these can give it.

It is the devil's master-piece to make us think well of ourselves.

Alas! who is humble? We disclaim perfection, and run down the preachers of it, from a general confused consciousness of our unworthiness, but cannot bear to be told of a trifling error in conduct. What management, gentle insinuation, and nice art of address, are necessary to prevent resentment in such cases, even from a friend!

We are sinners by the corruption of the heart; and it is a fatal mistake to suppose that we are so only by the commission of sin. Our guilt does not then begin to exist, when it is brought into action, but to appear; and what was always manifest to God, is now become so to ourselves and others.

We cannot go to the bottom of sin, without the convincing searching Spirit of God. If the work is to be our own, we shall deal so very tenderly with ourselves, that nothing can ever come of it.

It is said that riches, power, and distinction, are

apt to corrupt the heart. The truth is, they find it corrupt, and all they do is to set men at liberty to act according to their nature, and thus add to the strength of it. But are not many persons humble, orderly, and well disposed in a low estate, who become insolent and insufferable in prosperity? They might be hypocrites in a low estate, and conceal their passions and tempers for various causes, but they never were humble or well-disposed.

It would be a sad thing to think that we shall never be better than what we are, or can make ourselves.

All men are naturally in a state of hostility with some, and ready on occasion to be so with any, wife or child not excepted.

The passions do not always torment us; we could not bear it; but then the malignity of them is rooted in the constitution, though it does not always appear; as persons subject to fits have the cause lurking within, though they have them not every day.

When we open ourselves to others, it is partially and hypocritically, with prevarication, and great tenderness to ourselves, and with design to be admired and flattered by them rather than counselled and convinced. Alas! we do so to God more than we are aware of.

Man is ever at odds with God about the condition of his acceptance. He fancies he has some resources in himself, some worthiness of his own, that with a few grains of allowance, will bear him out; and he rejects the aids of the gospel. But the scripture is peremptory; he has none. "Without me ye can do nothing."

After the commission of sin, or any eruption of our inbred malignity, we quickly heal ourselves again and reinstate ourselves in our own good opinion. How much better would it be to let our nature appear in its frightful nakedness, and to consider that the cursed root of all still remains, and that, if not here destroyed,

in another world it can produce nothing but essential uninterrupted misery, when we have no longer the joys and comforts, cares and amusements of this life, to keep off the sight of ourselves!

If I bring my pride with me to the work of God, it will feed as sweetly on it as on any other distinction, and in the end fatally blast it.

We know we should be good, and therefore conclude at once that we are so; especially if we can read, and abound with notions. Our pride asks for no proofs.

Our being in this world given up to flesh and blood, is our fall. From the beginning it was not so. God and his angels see us where we are, with pity and concern. But man is positive that his present being, circumstanced as it is, was his original state; resolves to make the most of it; is almost equally fond of it, whether he laughs or howls out his time; never profits by his own, or other men's perpetual disappointments; and, in consequence of his mistake, dies worse than a brute.

Man has the worst qualities of brutes, without their best.

The observations I make on the pride and corruption of my nature, instead of humbling me, only give me a handle to value myself on my penetration.

It is to be feared, that a secret wish to be saved without holiness, is the great bar to our progress towards perfection.

Most men's notion of sin is only this, that whatever it is, they themselves are not guilty of it. None are so absurd as to think that they do all they should do, or that they are guilty of no deviations from the rule of right; but that their state is sinful on the whole, or that sin is damnable, they do not believe.

Our pride, delicate as it is, can be content to feed on that stench and corruption, which a little humility makes us nauseate.

The character of man is, proud sinner.

A creature made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God, and yet ignorant of him, and turned from him, or, which is all one, not turned to him in the bent of his will, desire, and affections, must necessarily be in a fallen state, and perverted from the end of its creation.

I do not want humanity or social virtue. I can be honest and civil, and observe the law of kindness in my actions; but who shall give me humility, meekness, patience, inward purity, and the love of God?

Men do not want the devil now to tempt them into a belief that they shall be as gods, knowing good and evil; they are but too well persuaded of their own ability.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" is a trying question, when it comes to be well considered.

If I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep.

What can show man's horrid corruption in a stronger light, than that war should be lawful (if it be lawful) to prevent greater mischiefs?

All the difference between sin latent and breaking out into act, is, that man now sees what God saw before. And our compunction is generally for the discovery of it. We can feel sin in ourselves for years, and know that God sees it, with very little concern.

It is no uncommon instance of the deceitfulness of the heart, for men to venture on the general contempt by becoming religious, and at the same time make all up to themselves by their own esteem or the good opinion of a few. But to be universally despised, and to know certainly, by an inward feeling not to be evaded, that we deserve it, is not so common or so easy.

The appearance of religion on Sundays only, proves that it is only an appearance,

It is not the least innocent kind of ambition, to seek after praise in the way of religious usefulness.

Never a day passes, but the devil offers his ser-ice.

Mankind are perpetually at variance, by being all one sect, viz. selfists.

We are undone by distinguishing time from eter-ity, and carrying on a separate interest for it. There e few who do not disobey God in the capital stance ordained for their trial. The obedience we mpliment him with, generally speaking, costs us thing.

Our state and being in this world is our fall, and e loss of our paradise; and we may as well seek licity in hell as here.

Who can value money at a higher rate, or pay arer for it, than the man who gets and keeps it in position to the light of conscience?

Human nature is like a bad clock; it may go right w and then, or be made to strike the hour, but its ward frame is to go wrong.

Our natural proneness to resentment, hatred, alice, never fails to shew itself on what we call a per occasion; that is, when we can make a shift flatter ourselves that we shall have the world on r side, and never more (O shame!) than in the use of God and religion. The misfortune is in inking that there ever can be any such occasion; d that we should ever think so, is sufficient proof our corruption and unfitness by nature for our per happiness.

It is strange we should not see the folly of putting rselves in the power of others, for much the greatest rt of our happiness: though we cannot help know-g that naturally they are more disposed to coun-act it, and want to be pleased and humoured mselves as much as we do.

Certainly, in a general way, the best merely moral aracters are only what any one may be, and all ident persons at all times would be, if Christ had ver come into the world.

Where is man's boasted rectitude, when he neither knows what it is, nor will accept it when he does?

Flying with horror from the thought that we are unfit to die, if God should take us this day and hour out of the world, keeps off the discovery of our true state more than any thing else, and fatally hinders our preparation for it.

We are often so much concerned about the appearance of happiness, as never to cast one thought towards the reality of it.

Human virtue works no cure, gives no peace.

We would be happy in spite of God and nature, in failure of duty, and with nothing about us but the grounds of misery.

If a man would know himself truly, let him consider what he is, and how he behaves where he has power; that is, where he thinks himself least obliged to dissemble.

When we see and judge rightly of the guilt and malignity of sin, still it is with a great reserve of tenderness for ourselves, and we chiefly mean the sin of others. Thus, instead of reforming, every one excuses one.

Reformation is the object we pretend to aim at, but we are perpetually mistaking the subject of it: it is ourselves.

It is dreadful, but perhaps not uncommon, self-deceit, to present ourselves before God with a lie in our mouths, and hypocrisy in our heart, or a secret unwillingness to be and do as we pray.

Where is the man who does all he can, and all that Christ demands of him? It would fill the most pious soul with shame and confusion to be upbraided by him for what it might have done.

What ado there is to work up the heart to any liking of God! The reason is, we begin it of ourselves, and think to do it in our own strength; whereas it can only be done in faith and the Spirit's power.

We are ruined by fancying we are what we know or read, or that we can make ourselves so in the turn of a thought; or if we do see and own a defect, yet thinking tenderly of ourselves when we are chargeable with horrid depravity, and absolutely unfit for God.

Man's holiness!—much ado about nothing. If you would have a good opinion of your heart, keep the Holy Ghost out of it.

Every one may have observed, that in paroxysms of passion, or ill humour, the judgment is absolutely disabled; we are incapable of reasoning; we feel keenly in the wrong, and are very positive. It is not uncommon for persons to be thus blind in cold blood, and some all their lives.

Reason never discerns itself or any thing else truly, till it sees its own impotence.

Some will mortify themselves in many things, and do almost every thing in religion but one; unfortunately that one is the test of their obedience, and the very thing required of them.

Let this be ever uppermost in my thoughts, and the great rule of my conversing withal, that we are immortal beings in the first stage of our existence, full of mistakes, or unconcerned about the matter, and yet dreadfully concerned in the issue.

Sense of an irretrievable error in life, fastening on the mind, is a foretaste of hell.

We may find out the selfish stubbornness of our wills, unmortified desires, and earthly bent, in small crosses, when we do not in greater. Great crosses seem to furnish some excuse for complaint, and nature is more pitied than blamed for sinking under them; but small ones, fretting and galling us, afford no refuge against conviction.

Despair is the growth of pride, and not of humility. Why are we overwhelmed with doubts and fears? Because we are unworthy. Is it not plain, therefore, that we look for a worthiness in ourselves, which we neither have nor ever shall have?

Why are we more alarmed and concerned at breaches of duty to man than God, but because they are seen and observed? What then is our principle of action?

When men love and admire us, we think it is for some merit in ourselves, and from a natural working of pride can love them again. It is for the same reason that we love God so little notwithstanding his superabundant goodness to us in Christ, because it lays us low, strips us of all excellence, and can only be received in a deep sense of our own unworthiness.

We are often more ashamed than grieved and humbled for our sins. Our own consciousness of them, and of God's being privy to them, does not pain us nearly so much as it would to have them known to others. See, therefore, whether what you call your penitence is not more pride than any thing else.

Why does the present hour come loaded with disgust, and lie heavy on our hands, but because we know not what to do in it; or resolve to do any thing but what we should?

Not one in a thousand forms his plan of life, and pursues it steadily from principle and regard to the will of God; if we did, there would hardly be an unhappy man in the world.

"God be merciful to me a sinner," said the publican. If I were to hear you wishing to be the man, I should hope well of your case; if you say you are, it is a hundred to one you are mistaken.

If you would know what your root is, consider how your virtues are in exercise towards God. You abhor the imputation of ingratitude; the meaning is, you would not have the world think that you are ungrateful; for perhaps you have not one spark of gratitude to your great Benefactor, your God and Father. You would not be false to the marriage-bed; but where is your fidelity to Jesus, the Lord and Husband of every Christian? And as to the point of justice, a most

ıcred virtue, and very high in your esteem, why ust every creature have its due from you, and not od? and why do you think so little of what is his ae? You honour the command of a man like ourself; but why are so many of God's commands ighted?

Learned men, and inquirers into nature, are bent ı knowing a great deal in this world, where we can ardly know any thing, and too often neglect the eans of knowing every thing in another.

Wretched mankind! who, in your natural state, ın only be happy in opposition to the will of od.

Every natural man's aim, in all he says and does, is st to gain his own good opinion, and then to appear ıtter to others than he does to himself. The scrip- ıre doctrine of the fall and universal depravity of ankind, though not denied, has but little effect, ıcause every man has a good opinion of one, and es corruption only in others.

It is a full vindication of Providence, that every an may choose God for his friend and portion, if he eases; and that so few do, is a full proof of the indness, corruption, and degeneracy of mankind.

It is the great dispute of the world, and of every an naturally with himself, whether happiness con- sts in the commission or forbearance of sin; and ost of those who declare for the latter, contradict emselves by their courses.

No one can boast of what he does, or ever think of inging it to account, who considers what he does t do.

Not to sin, may be a bitter cross; to sin, is hell.

In respect of sin, I am where the plague is, see my sick of it, and in continual danger myself.

A wrathful passionate man is a mount Vesuvius, llow, and stored with combustible matter, which is ery now and then breaking out, to the terror and guish of all about him.

God can save us only by his own power, for his glory, merely in a way of grace and favour, solely by Christ, to the end we may love, adore, and praise him; and yet the wish and will of man, notwithstanding the peculiar discoveries of the Christian religion, and the fullest conviction of infinite defect, is to be independent and self-saved.

I would gladly believe that the nature of mankind is not so bad as mine; and yet, when I observe the defects of the best of men, I find that there is but little ground for any such hope.

One great mistake of the world, and the greatest bar to the happiness and well-being of mankind, rich and poor, is thinking that all the money we are in possession of is our own.

Perhaps many who think themselves high in Christ's school, have not yet begun with his A. B. C.

I fear nothing so much, and there is nothing I have so much reason to fear, as myself.

If sin had not brought death into the world, and Christ to the cross, we should never have known so much of the goodness of God as we do.

Sinning is so much a nature, and so closely wrought into the constitution of man, that I can scarcely form a conception of existence without it.

I can no more root out the evil qualities of my soul by any volition, resolution, or efforts of my own, than I can think the stone out of my body.

O that I longed for the time of perfect deliverance both of soul and body!

O that sigh! Do happy people ever sigh? I find I want something which God will not suffer me to have; and till we are of the same mind, life can be nothing at bottom but one perpetual sigh.

We can take reproof patiently from a book, but not from a tongue. The book hurts not our pride, the living reprover does; and we cannot bear to have our faults seen by others.

We confess our emptiness to God in very strong

terms; and when we have done praying, are apt to depend altogether on ourselves.

It is a vain and impious thought to imagine that I can do any thing by my own strength. Dependence on God, in every single act of thinking and willing, is both my duty and security.

It may justly be questioned whether self-power can be communicated to a creature.

It is much easier to join one's self to a sect than to God.

The soul is naturally frightened and shrinks from the thought of living only on God and to God.

Submitting to the Spirit's operations, is like being laid on a table to be cut for the stone. Mortification carries death to the enemy of it, and is a stab at the heart. Nature's conclusion is, Therefore not to-day.

It is a sore trial to the soul which knows any thing of itself, to come close up to God: he is light and truth, all love and purity; the soul dark, selfish, and sin-polluted.

The reason why we should draw nigh to God, and keep a continual intercourse with him, is the reason why we do not; we want his light and help, and this want is the very thing which makes us averse to him, and keeps us from him.

Man would be intolerable to himself, and look out every way for help, if it were not for his pride.

There is in the heart of man a deeply-rooted covetousness; a subtle, worldly spirit, suggesting diabolical, murderous thoughts, for its own ends.

If God did not take us to himself, few would go to him of their own accord.

"Why callest thou me good?" O man, why callest thou thyself good?

We see and know enough of ourselves, to dread the thought of being seen and known by others; and knowing that God sees us, and looking on ourselves without pain, self-condemnation, or one mortifying

reflection, is a fatal symptom, and a full proof of our spiritual deadness.

We get a glimpse of true wisdom, and know how we should live, perhaps an hour before we die.

If we seek our happiness in any thing besides the peace of God and a good conscience, we shall as certainly be unhappy, as that every thing in the world is uncertain.

Parting with sin is harder than parting with my wife. She was bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; sin is in the bone and in the flesh, and twisted about every fibre of the heart.

Religious truths, and religious employments, are not so much our choice for the sake of their own excellence, as a force on nature, and what we fly to as some kind of relief from the vanity and insufficiency of every thing else.

If we might be easy and satisfied in and from the world, perhaps we should look no where else for happiness.

Though nature is dying, and, as to the strength and vigour of it, almost gone, corruption is strong as ever; and herein is full proof that it does not die with the body.

To unregenerate men, it is less painful to suffer than to do the will of God.

It is justly said that sin must be hated and abhorred for its own sake, apart from consequences; but who almost would not sin, in one respect or other, if he were equally sure of heaven, sin or not?

The more I attempt to murder time, the more life it has to murder me, soul and body. If I put my time in my pocket, it is no excuse to say that I do not carry it to the play-house.

Time waits on the soul early every morning, and says, What wilt thou have me to do to-day? It is a shame to say what the answer is, but it will one day be known.

I would willingly go to Siberia for the remainder of my life, if I could leave myself behind me.

The soul is not self-sufficient, cannot be independent, must have some prop; unhappily it chooses such as shrink from under it.

We do not set the mark of holiness high enough: we do not raise our desire up to the scripture standard of it; we do not trust and pray enough.

What should I be, if I had talents to be proud of, when I am so proud of nothing?

I cannot take the dimensions of Christ's love, without a proper knowledge of my own sin.

Strictly speaking, there is no difference of characters with God, in point of real excellence and exact conformity to his law.

Sin keeps no Sabbaths.

The folly of irreligion is either desiring that last which we most want, or presuming that we can do every thing for ourselves, and so never applying to God.

A full sight of the corruption of human nature, if we exempt ourselves from it in whole or in part, will certainly be followed with a splenetic contempt of others, approaching to misanthropy.

The deformity of present sin is hidden, or very much lessened by its concomitant pleasure; past sin, the pleasure of it being gone, appears to be what it is.

God's pity will hold me up and carry me through. My own, with all the reason I can put to it, and all the efforts I can make, is nothing.

How sad, during life, to have conscience only a tormentor!

My corruption is strong, and bondage to sin evident, when I am so long in making what I know to be a right and necessary choice.

I see my sin in every person I meet.

If the heart is not filled with a pure love, by a divine change, its nature is corruption, and it can be

nothing but a sink of iniquity, whatever disguises it may put on to deceive both the world and itself.

It would be great self-ignorance and presumption in me to say, I will not sin to-day.

Men love only those who love them, hardly any without a view to some advantage of their own, and never those who are enemies, or thwart their interest and inclinations. God loves man purely and disinterestedly, notwithstanding his vileness, aversion, and enmity to him.

People never tell more lies than in their prayers.

I should not have had the stone in my bladder or kidneys, or both, if I had not first had a stone in my heart.

Sinning is putting poison into the sting of death.

The great dependance through life, with most men, is on to-morrow, and to-morrow is still before, while it never will be overtaken.

It is the hardest thing in the world to call out in earnest for help against one's self, and yet all depends on it.

Though I have used myself to think meanly of the human heart, and have great reason so to do from the knowledge I have of my own, yet I am sensible that it is an unknown depth.

We never turn to God as our centre of rest, supreme delight, and sovereign good, till we have tried every thing else.

Gataker, supposing that the practice of Marcus Antonius was conformed to his sentiments, confesses with shame how far he came short of so great a pattern. But this very thing shows the superior excellence of the Christian: no heathen philosopher ever made such a confession. With all their knowledge they did not know themselves.

It is real, but most horrible truth, that the bulk of mankind are not in charity with God.

It is wonderful to consider how naturally we all lean to the law for salvation, without observing that

we are as naturally averse to the practice of it as inclined to lean to it, and that it is impossible to answer its demands.

If I could do for myself what I ask of God, I should be a god to myself: I should have little dependence on or regard to the God who made heaven and earth: I should hardly believe there is such a God.

Sin, by a natural right, demands execution of its curse at God's hands.

One reason why the world is not reformed is, because every man would have others make a beginning, and never thinks of himself.

If I were to think daily and hourly, and think of nothing else for a thousand years, but how to cleanse my heart, or root one vice out of it in my own strength, I should be no nearer to it at the end than I was at the beginning.

There may be horrid pride in confessing and aggravating our sins—'That ever I should do this!' Why, who are you? Do you not see that you are making yourself somebody with God?

Instead of making religious exercises a step of approach to God, seeking God by them, and pressing to God through them, there is danger of making them a pretence for keeping ourselves from him, and a means of quieting conscience without him.

It is a great point of religion to know the heart. I see but a very small part of its deceit, hypocrisy, and desperate wickedness.

We have commonly one master-sin, and are so blinded with it, as not to see others as great, and more dangerous, because they are hidden.

With what reluctance should we submit to sleep, if this present period of our existence were thoroughly happy! As it is not, it is a mercy that we are under a necessity of sleeping out so considerable a part of it; and this very necessity is also a proof and conviction, that we neither are, nor intended to be, perfectly happy in his present life. Whenever the

happiness of man is complete, God, the author of it, will not suffer it to admit of any interruption; "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. iv. 8.

Our whole behaviour by nature is a perpetual disguise. The mischief of this is, that we take ourselves not only for what we appear to be, but for what we would be thought to be; and continue strangers to the corruption of our hearts, and deaf to the word of God: the great purpose of which is, to discover and make known that corruption, the method of cure, and the necessity of complying with it.

Nature shrinks from the ghastly apparition of its own corruption; will not believe it in good earnest; thinks it may be retained, in part at least, with impunity; flies from the sight to sensuality and vain amusements. It is a dreadful thing for man, captivated as he is by the spirit of the world, to be told that he must die to it by a deep abhorrence of his state. This shows the necessity of that divine touch on our spirits, called faith; and the effect, wherever it is produced, proves the reality of it.

1 Sam. xii. 21. "And turn ye not aside, for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver;" together with Isa. xlv. 20, 21. Jer. xvi. 19, 20. See here the mischief and venom of idolatry. Man is in a fallen state; wants deliverance; cannot help himself; and yet, by a strange perverseness in his will and understanding, turns from the only Being that can help him, to things confessedly more impotent than himself. Sad proof of his degeneracy, and of the blind subjection he is in to evil spirits.

This world is confessedly not the region of happiness; all is uncertainty, disappointment, and delusion: one would think, therefore, that those at least who pretend not to love it, and to dread its snares, should be glad to be removed out of it into a place

of safety and happiness; but, generally speaking, they wish to be excused, and there are very few who really desire it. Alas! it is to be feared, that even those who are called, and think themselves Christians, are sadly insincere, and little known either to themselves or others.

I believe the highest angels are the humblest of all creatures. They neither glory in their rank, nor ascribe their state and continuance in it to their obedience and readiness to do the will of God; but cast their crowns down before the throne, as knowing they are what they are, by continual influxes from thence; and yet vile man thinks it hard that he may not make some reckoning of his works and services, even in his polluted, unregenerate state.

It is the nature of man to wrangle, fight, and shed blood. So long as men are men, there can be no such thing as peace, national, civil, or ecclesiastical.

The concealment of our good actions may proceed from pride, and without due care and reflection will increase it to a dangerous height. We shall be apt to make ourselves amends at home for our self-denial abroad, and to pay ourselves to the full that applause which we think we so justly deserve. And O how we hug the dear idol of self-complacency, when it is tinselled over with a show of humility.

The carnal mind is the life of sense; by which is not meant gross sensuality or immorality, but acquiescence in our state as such, without any thought or desire of a change; loving and adhering to the world; a full relish of earthly enjoyments, and a fondness for earthly comforts, and the means of procuring them. If this is the prevailing habit and temper of the mind, God is fatally excluded, let a man think what he will of himself, or what fair pretences soever he may make of religion. But, say some, 'How must we know when this is our case!' Never till the doctrine of the cross is in good earnest

attended to, and we come to understand the contrariety of such a state to the will of God, and consider it as our absolute unfitness for the kingdom of heaven. But then, this is not the whole of the carnal mind; to bring it farther into view, let us take our rise from scripture, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees," that is, of mere men, though ever so learned, "ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;" for the scribes and pharisees here represent the great doctors and rationalists, so called, of all ages and places; and it does not appear from scripture that they were scandalously defective in point of morals, or what is commonly called virtue. What then should be the reason that Christ, all mild and gracious as he was, ever speaks to and of them, with a sharpness that seems to need an apology? It was because they were foremost in a fatal error, and would be apt to lead others into it, viz. that of self-justification, and the reality and merit of human virtue, which at the best is infinitely defective, generally founded on rotten principles, and can never stand the judgment of God. This our Saviour shows plainly in the remainder of the chapter; and indeed in his whole sermon on the mount, as well as in other places of the gospel.

What an astonishing thing is sin, which makes the God of love and the Father of mercies an enemy to his creatures, and which could only be purged by the blood of the Son of God! Though all must believe this who believe the Bible, yet the exceeding sinfulness of sin is but weakly apprehended by those who have the deepest sense of it, and will never be fully known in this world.

"Their heart is far from me." Some time ago this text was strong on my mind, but soon neglected and forgotten. Supposing it to be suggested and presented by the Spirit for present use to no purpose, we may conceive the manner of the Spirit's working,

and how it is quenched by man's resistance or inattention.

The devil has great advantage from nature, pushing down-hill, and sometimes from the top to the bottom in a moment; the Spirit's work is up hill. It is by the greatest of miracles that any soul is ever brought to God.

How astonishing is the quantity of misery in the world! How many thousands are rending the air with the cry of pain and wretchedness! Strange, that ever there should be so much, that there should be any suffering in the creation of a good God! Doubtless there is a cause for it; and if Moses had not told us what it is, we should be for ever in the dark. O Adam, what hast thou done! O man, what art thou always doing? O Jesus, what hast thou not done to relieve guilt and pain; to sweeten adversity; to blunt the sting of death; to restore happiness in some degree to the earth, and insure it in eternity!

Sin is against my retirements, against my prayers, against the sacrament, against the bowels and wounds of Christ, against my possession and enjoyment of him, against peace in life and comfort in death, against time, against eternity, against all my hopes.

I am sure both from scripture, and long experience of my weakness, that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do; and yet my self-sufficient efforts towards a better estate are a practical denial of this belief: instead of leaving it to God to verify his word, and execute his own promises, I would fain do all by a willing and working of my own.

A person may be high in saintship, and yet dumb to the question, Do you not break every one of the commandments?

It is the general opinion of mankind, and what the fathers, Chrysostom and others, flourish much on with great confidence, that the will is free. I do not find it so. The captivity of the will is my misery,

and great complaint before God; nor do I think that if it were in equilibrio, any man on earth would choose evil. The scripture affirms that the imagination of man's heart is evil continually; and it is a great point gained, and directs to a necessary subject of prayer, to know that the will is bound, and that none but God can set it free.

If God should do any thing but what he does, in any the minutest instance, send one drop of rain more or less, diminish one pain, heighten one enjoyment, add or take away one moment of life, the consequence might be very bad; and yet, what is almost all the praying in the world for, but to tell him that we are displeased with his will, and desire him to change it?

When sin is to be renounced as sin, and consequently all sin, the resistance of nature is incredible.

If hypocrisy is taking up more reputation than we can answer in real worth, who is not an hypocrite?

Nothing is a greater proof of man's folly and corruption, than that if he were left to choose his own happiness, and order all events for himself and others, he would certainly ruin both himself and them.

Sin is the sole cause of all the evil that is in the world, either as produced by it, or the punishment of it.

Forbearing sin, because I am to pray at such an hour, or receive the sacrament such a day, is only putting it off to a more convenient time.

While the veil is on the heart, the veil is on every thing.

Whenever I spy a fault in another, I am determined to look for two in myself, and they will not be far to seek.

As meanly as I think of mankind, I still find myself inordinately pursuing their applause, and am

apt to fear their censure, more than the displeasure of God.

Every natural man has one or more good qualities, by which alone he estimates his worth and character, and lives and dies an infidel to his bad ones.

Whatever we see without the Spirit's eyes, can have no other effect than to fill us with conceit of a knowledge which we have not, and seal us up in carnal security.

Hell is the being given up to the full knowledge and essential malignity of sin,—the scripture says, without hope, and for ever; and it does not appear to me that any criticism has yet explained away the precise meaning of it.

Opposition to the will of God is the essence and sole cause of all our misery. There is no possibility of happiness but in compliance with it, and yet there can be none in a forced conformity to it. It must of all necessity be the great object of the soul, its rest and centre, and every thing must be sacrificed to it cheerfully and with delight. Who shall bring us to this? For if it is not my nature, I see at once that I can no more make myself so, than I could make myself at the first.

The understanding discerns, in most cases, as truly and immediately what is right, as the eye does light and colours; and why then does not the will always comply with the dictates of reason and judgment? It would if it were free.

Sin is the only thing which God hates, and almost the only thing that man loves.

There is not an outward sin but we can resolve against and abstain from it, to avoid shame and the censure of the world. Two things follow from hence; first, that natural weakness, in respect of sin, is not so great as is pretended; the other is dreadful to think of, and dreadfully plain, viz, that if we do not resolve against and avoid all sin for God's sake, from whom we know nothing is hid, we do not fear him.

Sin must be resisted, and the outward act of any sin may be avoided; but we cannot cast it out of the heart.

Sensible fear and love of God, or dread of his displeasure, and an habitual, steady resolution to secure his favour, is the work and proof of regeneration by a divine power; for naturally we neither have this disposition, nor ability to acquire it.

When reason is convinced and duty evident, still the will is bound, and no power of man can set it free.

The generality think of nothing but getting to heaven by a lie; either that they have little or no sin, or that sin has little or no harm in it.

We tell God that we are sinners, miserable and helpless, but cannot bear to be told so by others.

Think not what you are or have, but what you should be and are not, and then be proud if you can.

Christ says, "Sit down in the lowest room;" but the lowest, according to St. Paul, is so very low, that hardly a single man will sit down in it. Read Rev. iii. 17, 18; Gal. v. 19—21; Titus iii. 3.

With respect to a man's character, he had better be guilty of almost any sin than, what the world calls, too much religion.

Man is fallen into a deplorable state of blindness, impotence, and corruption; will not believe it in good earnest; prides himself in his own abilities; will stand or fall by the light of what he calls his reason, and rejects his only remedy, which is dying to his state and nature, his own works, will, and wisdom, that Christ may live in him, and be all in all to him, wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and, by these, redemption.

It is a rare thing for people to think themselves fools now; it is esteemed humility enough to think that they have been so.

We should never have so goodly a conceit of ourlves, if we had not first an undue opinion of selfower; that is to say, unless we are proud, and full a spirit of independency. It seems to be the most neral opinion, that this was the cause of the angels' d of Adam's fall: and if so, it is the greatest bar the recovery of the soul.

Whatever was the sin of Lucifer, it is probable the n of Adam was the same. It is natural to suppose ie devil would tempt him to transgress in the same ay that he himself did, as well knowing the sad fects of it.

Virtue is considered by us as necessary chiefly for ie peace and welfare of society; and this is geneally pretty well secured by that spurious thing hich has the name of it, viz. convenience, ease, and sense of reputation. If our behaviour is but calulated to answer these ends, we look no farther; nd perhaps wonder in the pride of our hearts, why od does not, as he easily might, interpose to preent the mischiefs occasioned by the perverseness of few. But then, he himself is ever and anon roubling the order of the world and the repose of ndividuals, by terrible inflictions. The consequence s plain—we are ignorant of our state, and live in a erpetual mistake. God does not make so great eckoning of this life as we do. He aims at the eformation of the heart; and the severe methods he akes to bring it about, prove the necessity of such a eformation.

What farther proof can we need of the wretched erverseness and corruption of man's heart, than hat he should desire, esteem, and love the things hich are confessedly unable to make him happy, nd that what can, should be the only thing he does ot desire?

The man who knows himself to be a devil, is in a air way to be a saint. Rom. iii. 9, 18.

It is no *uncommon thing* for men to do good with-

out virtue, give without charity, and pray without religion.

It is difficult to keep self from mingling with the work of salvation. We think it hard that we may not be allowed to pay something towards the price of it; to contribute some work or fancied worthiness of our own; that is to say, (shocking thought!) we should put something of our own into the scale with the blood of Christ, to make it full weight.

There is something odd happens in the mixing of paganism with Christianity. The appearance of Christianity remains, the substance evaporates; the appearance of paganism vanishes, the substance remains.

If we were left to nature to choose a god and a heaven for ourselves, it would not be the God that made the heavens and the earth, nor our heaven that where he dwells.

Reading is for the most part only a more refined species of sensuality, and answers man's purposes of shuffling off his great work with God and himself, a well as a ball or a masquerade.

Man is an arrant bungler at God's work; he spoils all if he does but touch it with a finger. What a terrible mortification, to think that the business of his salvation cannot go forward unless he is separated from himself, and, as it were, outlawed as a mischievous person, or thrown into a corner as a piece of useless lumber!

Business, amusements, company, a general relish of life, and a confused hope of mercy in God or of future amendment, keep the soul tolerably quiet here; but how dreadfully amazing is it to think of its being consigned to a state of eternal reprobation, without one single object to divert its attention from its own frightful nakedness!

It may not be improper to consider every person we happen to be in company with, in three respects, let his station or circumstances be what they will:

st, as having an high opinion of himself; 2nd, as ne for whom Christ died; and, 3rd, as naturally ring under great disadvantages with regard to his piritual concerns. The first will be a caution to us ot to affront or offend him; the second will engage s to promote his salvation; the third to pity his nfirmities.

The greatest want of all, is a want of the sense f our wants. This is the root of infidelity.

The generality of those who lead regular moral ives, and think themselves settled on a good bottom, or having been baptized, &c. are but the more confirmed in a natural, unconverted state by what they call their virtue. It is evident, from a hundred hings they say and do, that the root of the matter is ot in them.

On little occasions, and for mere trifles, I can ecome a hell to myself. What should I do with his accursed nature, if I had no other company ut devils, who would take a malicious pleasure n goading and stinging me into their own torments?

Every man naturally turns on his own centre, and s as much a detached system from every other man, s one fixed star is from another; what regard he as for the species, or connection with it, arises olely out of this very selfishness or individuality.

If we were but half Christians, the world would e at peace with us.

What is generally meant by a moral man, is one who does not govern himself by the fear of God, r the ten commandments, but by a law of his own making.

It is matter of great self-abasement, and full proof f our depravity, that sin, the only thing which God ates, we should hate so little.

Did the sight of your own deformity never make you start?

We were *made to live* in God as our element, and

are not in it. If this is not a fall, ruin, and death, what is?

The devil will suffer us, nay, if it were possible, he would help us to put away every sin but one, if he could be sure we would keep that one.

'God lives through all life,'—the soul of man not excepted, which is no more self-sufficient than self-existent, but the most helpless of all beings, though it proudly challenges independence.

The world is not altered since the time of Socrates. Ask one by one, and see who is not mistaken as to the quantity of his wisdom and goodness.

If we were naked and open to all the world as we are to God, and in some measure to ourselves, how loathsome and abominable, what monsters, should we appear!

It is time to have done with future prospects, or a vain imagination that we shall be happy, or more at ease, when such a point is gained, or such an impediment removed; whereas nothing is more certain than that every period of life, and every day, will bring its own burden along with it; and that there is no possibility of happiness, but in bearing it according to the will of God.

CHAPTER V.

REPENTANCE.

THE repentance which precedes faith, consists chiefly of a sense of danger and a fear of punishment; but when we come to have a lively apprehension of pardoning love, and our adoption in Christ, it is genuine, filial sorrow for having offended God.

Generally speaking, it is to be feared we do not dread sin, but the punishment of it; and yet till we hate sin, as such, and feel our misery under it, it is in vain to talk of repentance.

Till we are so convinced of sin as fully to pronounce the sentence of condemnation on ourselves, we shall not receive mercy as mercy, but consider it as a debt.

So long as we are joined to the world; acting in the main for worldly ends; attached to its interests; oppressed with its cares, or devoted to its pleasures; we must either totally reject, or explain away the gospel.

The law is not satisfied by an outward observation of it, but by the inward disposition of the heart; we break it as much by the bare outward keeping of it only, as by living in an avowed neglect of it. Perhaps the best of men may find, on consideration, that they never performed one act of true and pure obedience in all their lives. What conviction is here! and what a terrible blow is this to our pride!

Humility is a true sense of our state, and must necessarily go before a cure; but then where is the virtue or merit of it? A man full of noisome, stinking sores, would be a madman if he did not look out for a remedy, whenever he came to be sensible of his condition, but more so if he took any merit to himself for knowing that he was thus diseased.

When once we can bear to know the truth of ourselves, we shall be little concerned who else knows it.

It is the vainest of all vanities, and pride in perfection, to pretend to separate ourselves from the world outwardly, before we are separated from it inwardly.

Corruption is strong, evil predominant, my state is wavering, my soul in danger. Christ does not reign, I am in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, till I fully resolve not to sin.

No man has the least glimpse of the inside of truth, till all conceit of merit and self-power is annihilated, and he is pierced through and through with a sense of his vileness and unworthiness.

How happy are we when we can say truly, 'Lord, thou knowest all my desire;' and much more, when we can sigh and groan, mourn and weep, before God!

As God looks principally at the heart, so it is there he carries on his saving work.

We may polish our outward man, but what shall we do by it, but to get the name of whited sepulchres?

Must I always be humbling myself, and going over the same track of repentance? Yes, till I have no sin, and to the end that the same thoughts and words may take fast hold of me, and become a habit by repetition.

I should consider the Ethiopian's skin and the leopard's spots more than I do, that I may pray more feelingly, and cast myself wholly on divine power.

Is there any such thing as regeneration, or a change of nature from sensuality to purity of heart, from flesh to spirit, from sin to holiness, from the world to God? So the scripture says, and that nothing less is being Christian.

I endeavour to take a measure of sin, that I may know my obligations to Christ, and the necessity of his death; for sin helps me to take a measure of it. I hardly know which is first in the order of thinking, but all is well when they act reciprocally on each other.

It is the Spirit's office to convince of sin, because he only has the power; nothing that others can say, or I can think, will bring me to a true sense and feeling of it without him.

Till we know sin, and feel the burden of it in some degree, we shall be blind to every thing else in scripture, whether of nature or grace; we shall pray with great reserve, and never mean half of what we say.

Rather than be ignorant of my sin, Lord, speak to me in pain, sickness, loss of earthly comforts, or any affliction thou choosest.

I am all astonishment when I think of the number and greatness of my sins, and how long my life has been spared that I might repent.

There may be an abiding consciousness of sin, with self-condemnation, where there is not the least degree of self-indignation, or self-abhorrence. Humility is knowing that we are not humble.

There is a vast difference between knowing and feeling sin, and spiritual things. We may know of ourselves, or, by teaching, may be well principled, and abound in notions; but it is the spirit only that makes us feel.

If we would put doing in the place of thinking, knowing, and wishing, we should understand the meaning of Rom. vii. and be convinced of the want of a better righteousness than our own.

Pride is seeing the defects of others, and overlooking our own. Humility is seeing, feeling, and lamenting sin in ourselves; not only past, but present sin; not only actual sin, but the root of it in our evil nature, and all sin without disguise or extenuation, in all its guilt and malignity.

No man is humbled or sincere with God, till he is willing to know the worst of himself.

The Spirit's coming into the heart, is the touch of Ithuriel's spear, and it starts up a devil.

If I see myself bad enough for Christ, he sees me good enough.

If my nature, heart, will, and affections, must be changed, God must do it; for I can no more change them than I could make myself. God commands to strike at the root of sin: Christ puts the axe, sharpened with his blood, into the hands of all who are willing, and the Spirit gives strength to the blow.

Angels fell from a state of distinguished excellence, and man rises into their place through vileness and emptiness. Oh! the depth!

God never makes any man what he should be, without first making him know what he is. O God, take the veil from my heart: take the world, take pride, take self out of my heart, and write there all thy laws, I beseech thee.

It is a hard thing, and a sore conflict, to renounce all sin, as sin, fully, finally, irrevocably; and probably many of those who think they do, never tried it, and are hidden from themselves.

Whenever I sin, in thought, word, or deed, or whatever sin I commit, the penalty of death is incurred, the thing is done and past, and all the world cannot reverse the sentence. The right spiritual understanding and conviction of this is the beginning of faith, and throws us on Christ.

Legal repentance is before the cross of Christ, and brings us up to it; evangelical is after, and

begins from it. The latter only is genuine, effectual, and lasting.

Is the evil I feel in myself painful and a burden to nature as sin? or could I be content, and perhaps better pleased with it, if I were sure God would never lay it to my charge?

I had rather know a work of the Spirit in mourning for sin, as displeasing to God, in love to Christ, and because it pierced him, than be at the top of worldly joy.

There is no possibility of enjoyment but in following the natural bent; for which reason virtue, to be happiness, must not be only from principle, and as it were forced on us by teaching, but the genuine result and feeling of a nature. And how can that be but by a new birth?

Whenever I know but the tenth part of my sin, I shall know that I am not beholden to Christ for nothing.

If God did not lay the burden of sin on us, no man would lay it on himself. How few ever feel it!

Repentance is forsaking sin for God, for his favour, his blessing, and will.

I believe it will be found that the repentance of most men in not so much sorrow for sin as sin, or real hatred of it, as sullen sorrow that they are not allowed to sin.

It is fatal trifling with our souls, and horrid delusion, to see sin less or condemn it less in our selves than we do in others; but who can deal freely with himself in this point without conviction from the Spirit of God?

I have no proper idea of the horrible, cursed nature of sin, as represented in the cross of Christ; but if it is so seen as to be avoided, it is enough.

Seeing and condemning sin in ourselves as we do in others, without showing it mercy, is repentance, and then who almost repents?

Every sin when newly committed, amazes and

terrifies the soul, though the sense of it soon wears off. How shall we be able to bear the anguish of all our sins together, when conscience, which forgets and extenuates none, brings them to our remembrance?

We may be fully convinced that spiritual things are incomparably the most worthy of our esteem, without giving them the preference in our affections. The former is a degree of illumination, the latter only is conversion.

A work of grace is carried on in the way of our own thoughts, and with the consent of the will; but this concurrence does not affect the work, and is no more a proof of self-power, than the earth's fertility, which is wholly owing to a blessing from the clouds.

The moment we sin, there is an absolute forfeiture of life incurred; nothing but mercy can now relieve us, and we must always see ourselves in the light of condemned malefactors; for no future amendment can undo what is past.

Till we sin, we can never see it taken away; but merely seeing and feeling the plague of sin is not repenting of it; it is seen and felt in hell.

No man ever turns to God for help, believes in Christ, or prays for the Spirit, till he is frightened at himself; and we need not know the worst of ourselves to be heartily frightened.

One sin, fully known, and pressing home on the conscience in all its guilt and malignity, leads to the discovery of more, for there is a fatal connexion.

There may be a consciousness and conviction of sin without hatred of it, real humility, self-abhorrence, or the extinction of one spark of pride.

Finding that I am destitute of Christian graces and holy tempers, the question is, how I must get myself possessed of them. And I am convinced at once, I can no more introduce a new set of affections into my nature, than I could make myself at the first. If the scripture had not told us that this change can be effected by nothing less than a divine power, the

thing speaks for itself. Show me a man of whom it can be truly said, that he loves what he hated, and hates what he loved, and I will pronounce him to be God's workmanship.

I see less malignity in sin, and can more easily forgive it, because I consider it, not chiefly as sin against God, but against myself, my own ease, reputation, and interest; in this point, and a leading one it is, scriptural knowledge differs totally from natural. The repentance which brings us to Christ is toward God.

Lopping off the branches of sin, is labour in vain, and always to be renewed; there is no way but laying the axe to the root.

Sin should sit heavier on the soul, and cut deeper into the heart, than the loss of a first-born. Blessed are they that mourn; and who has not cause for it?

Till a man feels sin as poison in his blood, and finds that he cannot get rid of it in this world, he will never think in good earnest of another.

No man has any warrant from scripture to believe that his sins are forgiven, unless he repents of them; that is, is heartily sorry for them, and earnestly desires to be delivered from the power of evil habits, and an evil nature.

It cannot be expected that any man, not a gross sinner, should repent; that is, charge himself with guilt and folly, and desire a change of his state, till he is convinced of the universal, total depravity of human nature. If he is persuaded that there is any excellence, dignity, rectitude, or good belonging to the species, he will compliment himself with it all.

It is impossible for any man to know Christ to be a Saviour, till he knows himself to be a sinner.

Man is never in God's way in spirituals, till he quits himself and his own way. And this I take to be the most natural meaning of the words, "except ye be converted, and become as little children," who are *confessedly helpless*, incapable of acting for, and

governing themselves, " ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

It would be thought monstrous arrogance, blasphemy, and invasion of God's prerogative for any one to pretend to make the soul and body of a man. And yet perhaps it is no less presumption to pretend to any share in the creation of the spiritual man in Christ. How is it possible I should form the image of God in myself, when I do not know what it is, nor ever shall, till it is actually produced in me? It is well for us that the want of such a previous idea is no hindrance to our reception of it; and for this we have St. Paul's word, who says, that what God worketh in us is exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. This deserves to be considered by the narrowers in all sects and parties.

Justification by faith can never be received, desired, sought after, or even understood, till the soul has been well disciplined and broken under the pressure of the law, and brought to a full sight and experience of its inability to answer the demands of it. And our acceptance of the free grace of God in Christ will always necessarily be more or less sincere, more or less fruitful in good works, in proportion to our sense of the want of it.

Those who have felt the misery of an evil conscience, and laid groaning with anguish of spirit under a heavy sense of God's wrath, are comparatively in little danger of returning to such a state after they have once been delivered from it.

I cannot get within myself, and yet all depends on it. It is not enough to know that God sees me, unless I see myself in my own frightful nakedness.

There is nothing like being pinched, and sore galled with a sense of guilt. Redemption by Christ will then be viewed in its proper point of light; the glad tidings of the gospel eagerly embraced by the disconsolate fainting soul. It is impossible for those *who* never felt the trouble and uneasiness of a

wounded conscience, to desire, or believe, or value the peace of God. It is by a miracle that any man repents. Many see the folly of their conduct, and are sorry for the inconveniences they have brought on themselves and others by it; but to be convinced of guilt before God, to have a sight and sense of our vileness, and a hearty detestation of ourselves for it, is what I believe never happens but under the working and influence of God's Spirit.

God will have his grace acknowledged in the free pardon of our sins. But this can never be till we feel and know in good earnest that we are sinners. God brings us under the bond of the law, that his mercy may be magnified in releasing us from the terror, curse, and punishment of it. The end of this procedure is to shew man his obligation to the performance of the law, his demerit in the breach of it, and God's love in our forgiveness. And, in our present circumstances, there is no other method of introducing into the soul a sincere love of God, for naturally we do not love him.

When God calls to us in our hiding-place, and says, "Where art thou?" the stoutest heart will be afraid, notwithstanding its covering of fig-leaves.

The knowledge of ourselves, and of our sinful condition by the fall, is one main point in religion; but then it is often a long time before we are enough pinched with the sense of it, to pray in good earnest.

When we find out our sin in one instance, it should convince us of the guilt of more yet undiscovered, and lead us to the accursed root of all.

All is delusion and sad mistake, till we know Christ inwardly and experimentally by the Spirit, as applying his whole salvation and every part of it to the soul: 1. In his sore judgments, convincing us of the greatness and damnableness of sin, and of our own sin in particular: 2. In his comforts raising us to a clear sense of, and cheerful confidence in God as a reconciled Father: 3. In his cleansing operations,

turning the strong man out of possession, and enabling us to say triumphantly, "Behold all things are become new." The great danger of miscarrying in this work, is by passing too cursorily over the first step, healing our wounds slightly, and justifying ourselves too hastily.

We are never so near heaven as when we find ourselves almost in hell. We cannot stay long there.

It is impossible we should ever be on a footing of truth and sincerity with others, till we know how to speak the truth to ourselves.

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS CHRIST.

CHRIST comes with a blessing in each hand, forgiveness in one, and holiness in the other; and never gives either to any who will not take both.

Christ's forgiveness of all sins is complete at once, because less would not do us good; his holiness is dispensed by degrees, and to none wholly in this life, lest we should slight his forgiveness.

I owe it to Jesus that I have a moment's quiet.

The love of God springs from the knowledge of Christ, and seems impossible to man in any other way.

I owe Christ a heart, a will, a life.

The Lord's Christ is the soul's joy, support, and confidence in all states and conditions; riches in poverty, comfort in trouble, ease in pain, health in sickness, life in death.

I see the glory and blessedness of God in giving his Son to die for such sinners as I am, and would give the world to have a lively gratitude and burning love to him in my heart; but can have no peace but in thinking that he died for my ingratitude.

Christ's riches, as in himself, are unsearchable; in us they are soon told.

The salvation of man is as much the gift of God and the work of Christ, as his life and being.

Christ never comes into the soul unattended. He brings the Holy Spirit with him, and the Spirit his train of gifts and graces. Lay the foundation in him, and leave it to him to raise God's building on it.

Christ obeyed and suffered for me, that his obedience and sufferings might be imputed to me; and because no obedience or sufferings of mine could answer the demands of divine justice, or be effectual to my purification. A maintainer of this opinion, at the same time affirms that it is no argument for the presumption, impenitence, or lukewarmness of man; but an operative and most efficacious principle of obedience, and a sacred bond of gratitude on his soul, to do and to suffer in his turn, according to the measure and capacity of a creature, and to press to every height of virtue, after the example of so kind a Conductor, in obedience to the commands of so gracious a Master, in confidence of the assistance of so powerful a Saviour, who died for him on earth, intercedes for and succours him from heaven, and has taken him into himself by a mysterious union, that he might accept him to the reward of his own spotless holiness.

It has been the general opinion of Christians, in all times and places, that Christ suffered instead of sinners, and that we have remission of sins through faith in his blood-shedding; but the opinion of an imputed righteousness is far from being general; though a substitution is every whit as intelligible, and perhaps as much wanted in one case as the other: and the same reasons that hold for the rejection of one, will equally hold for the rejecting of both.

The righteousness of Christ is never imputed to any man, who does not desire and endeavour to be so completely righteous as not to stand in need of it.

Let him who rejects the righteousness of Christ, consider well what ground he stands upon, and what he has to trust to.

The righteousness of Christ imputed and applied by faith, becomes such a reality as is not at all for an

impenitent sinner's purpose. If he knows what it is, and for what end it is given, he does not desire it; nor do I think it possible for an impenitent person to believe it, let him pretend what he will. Christ is the glass in which we see God and ourselves; and if we attempt to see either ourselves or him through any other medium, we shall fall into infinite mistakes.

Christ still manifests his Messiahship by his presence, and says to the desiring soul, as he did to the woman of Samaria, "I that speak unto thee am he."

To comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, we must first take the dimensions of our own sin.

I know so much of Christ as not to be afraid to look my sins in the face.

Christ was Christ to a believing Jew before his coming, as well as now to a Christian; nay, the faith of the Jew seems to have been of a more excellent kind, as it had a thicker veil to penetrate through.

Christ says, "Take up the cross;" and very evident it is that some of his commands, literally taken, have the cross in them. Take this out, and then wherein does he differ from other legislators? Or what remains but a bare religion of nature? which, we may be sure, will never bear too hard on flesh and blood.

All the power and love of God is in the man Christ.

Christ is God, stooping to the senses and speaking to the heart of man.

Christ brings down God to the capacity of man, and raises man to the nature of God.

Christ stands between the wrath of God and the sin of man, intercepting the one, and purging the other.

Nothing in nature is life, light, and truth, but Christ, and therefore nothing else can be so to the soul.

Christ saw and felt every sin of mine distinctly, when he sweat great drops of blood in the garden, and cried out on the cross, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

God will come near to us to judgment, and be a

swift witness against us, whenever we dare present ourselves at his bar in our own name.

Christ had most amazing love, and a piercing sight of the danger and misery of mankind, when the pain of the cross could not hinder him from saying, "Father, forgive them." A lively apprehension in us of what he then saw and knew, sets us at work in good earnest for ourselves and others.

I want the outward sun to cherish my body, and invigorate the animal life; much more the warmth, light, and healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness, to comfort my soul.

When we had lost all by one father, God gave us another to recover it to us with advantage; and our life is now safe in Christ's keeping.

We fell from God through the disobedience of the first Adam, and return to him through the obedience of the second.

Christ can be nothing but himself in every soul where he comes, loving his own life, doing his own works, rejecting all sin, and seeking only to please God. It must be so for Christ's sake. There must be sincere renunciation of all sin for his love who died for me, and because I hope to see his face in heaven to whom I have so great obligations.

Christ's peace is his peace altogether, dearly purchased by him, and given to sinners standing in need of it. If it is to be of my own procuring, and I can have none but by entire freedom from sin, I am undone.

I owe Christ ten thousand thousand times more than I can pay; and all he requires of me is to accept a discharge, and settle my love on him; not as any part of payment, but because he knows I cannot otherwise be happy.

If ever we get to heaven, we shall know that we do not sing praises to the Lamb for nothing,—"who has abolished death" and damnation, by his death and resurrection, and "brought life and immortality

o light by the gospel;" revealing, offering, and onveying it to all that believe and accept it as God's ift, live for it, and rejoice in it as their portion and nheritance from the Lord.

Christ, by taking our sin on himself, took it clean way from us; banished it out of the creation, and ternally annihilated it to every believer, who is as ar from the charge of it before God, as if there never ad been any such thing in the world. And if he id not do this for us, he did nothing. If we have ne sin remaining that he did not expiate, we are till under a sentence of death.

The two main pillars of Christ's religion are, the epth of sin, and the height of righteousness; and one but he could atone for the one, and perform he other.

A thousand saints, with all their fortitude, patience, and united efforts, could not bear the burden of one sin. What then did Christ endure when all the sins of the world were laid on him!

"Herein is love!"—superlative, inconceivable, infinite;—"that he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,"—without exception of any sins or sinners. Why do I not steadily believe it? Why do I harbour a doubt of it? Why do I ever forget it? Why am I not always rejoicing in the happy assurance of it?

Some look unto Christ with godly sorrow, gratitude, love, and a purpose of obedience; some with horrid presumption, and the deceitfulness of a desperately wicked heart, to make him a cover for carnal indulgence; the generality with great coldness and indifference.

Christ says to man, "Live," not for any good he sees in man; but when he is, and because he is, lying in his blood. He can enlighten the dark heart; he can purge the defiled heart; he can bend the stubborn heart; he can fix the inconstant heart; he can *quicken the dead heart*; he can spiritualize the

earthly heart; he can universalize the selfish heart; he can comfort the sorrowful heart: all cold and icy as it is, he can make it a heart of pure love; he can be himself in the heart. Blessed be his name!

O Jesus! my Lord and my God! my Saviour by thyself, from thyself! how wonderful art thou! What should I do but for Christ? Another question completes the character of the Christian,—What shall I do for Christ?

God testifies to me, to my soul, that Christ is risen from the dead, and I with him, by an indisputable, abiding matter of fact, viz. his sending the Holy Ghost into my heart.

Christ in me will be the same God-devoted, sin-hating, soul-loving, self-denying, suffering, labouring Christ, that he is in himself.

Nothing but the blood of Christ can wash out the foul stains of my life; and that will do it. As surely as sin is death, Christ is life.

Without Christ we should never have known what sin is; without the knowledge of sin we should never have known what Christ is. O my soul, magnify the Lord, and rejoice in God thy Saviour!

CHAPTER VII.

FAITH.

FAITH does not consist in thinking that my sins are comparatively little, and therefore may be forgiven; but in knowing that they are very great, and believing that, though they are never so many and great, past or present, Christ's blood is above them all.

Nothing but Christ's blood, taking away, and as it were annihilating sin, can quiet an awakened conscience. Repentance implies an abiding self-dislike and self-abhorrence, and can neither destroy the existence, nor extinguish the remembrance, nor heal the smart, of past sin; the torment of it can never die but with a conviction that Christ took it all on himself.

My sins are many and great, and continually rising up against me; but I must not, I must not make God a liar, deny my Saviour, and grieve the Spirit by refusing his comfort. I may have more joy of Christ than I could have had of innocence or any sanctity of my own. O Adam, what hast thou done? O Jesus, what hast thou not done?

The man who has no doubts and fears, has no faith.

Perfect obedience being impossible, it is necessary that all should have some reserve at hand in the want of it; *something* to support their hope, and

give peace to their consciences; sincerity or Christ. But the former can no more be pleaded, than perfect obedience; and if faith in Christ, suffering in our stead what we should have suffered, and doing for us what we cannot do, is not our appointed relief, the case of mankind is desperate.

If Christ will take my sins, I may well give him every thing else.

'*Fides Christum mihi donat, charitas ex fide me proximo,*' says Luther; that is, Faith gives me Christ, and love from faith gives me to my neighbour.

God grants me forgiveness, not because I have so much repentance, or so much obedience, to bring him as the price of it, but of his free goodness, because I want it, and must be undone without it; and because he knows, whether I do or not, that I have only one thing to say to him,—"God be merciful to me a sinner!"

The scripture bids us do every thing, and at the same time tells us that we can do nothing: the conclusion is, that what is commanded must be done, and cannot be done without help.

Christ crucified for our sins, is the chief thing in our religion we should know, and almost the only thing which the generality of the Church of England do not know.

Christ came into the world to take away my sin, by taking it on himself; and if I go to him with it, my comfort is that it cannot be too great for him.

The experience and possession of divine pity is better than bodily ease, freedom from trouble, or the greatest worldly prosperity.

What has not God given me, in giving me a will to pray? All the rest is his work; and I am as sure, as the word and promise can make me, that not one prayer will be lost.

I shall obey when I have the will, and none can set it free but God: it is the mountain which faith has to remove. Thinking we have most power where

we have the least, is the great error of the world, and has been mine all my life.

What a mercy, above all miracles, that I who am a sinner, a three-score years old rebel, and have done that every day of my life, which lost Adam his paradise and brought death into the world, should have my abode on earth prolonged; that if it be possible I may not come short of my birth-right; that I may leave off sinning, and say before I die, "Lo, I come to do thy will!"

When I think what the devil can do, in conjunction with my nature, what I have been, am, and shall be, it is transporting news to be told that there is such a thing as believing unto righteousness, and that salvation is wholly in and by a substitute. This is a hard point: and yet if God is always the same, there can be no other possible hope for a creature always sinful.

I am as sure, on the word and promise of God, that my sins are done away in Christ, as if an angel were to bring me a release in writing, or I were now in heaven out of all danger. Shall I not be at God's bidding for this, and put myself into his hands for the further mercies of gratitude, love, obedience, a willing heart, and heavenly affections?

The angels do not work for life or reward, because they are already possessed of it, penetrated with a lively sense of God's love to them in their happiness, and therefore all on fire to do his will; so should we, if we would but enter more into the knowledge and present possession of our happiness, by faith in Christ.

From the depth of my sin, and the most astonishing evil of it, I raise some faint conception of God's love in Christ. Well might he say, "My thoughts are not as your thoughts," &c. Isaiah lv. 8.

Christ came to teach a pure morality, and assert the necessity of a perfect law-keeping, but does not expect to find it in us; he therefore wrought it for us.

There is no security till Christ puts his wedding-ring on my heart.

Power to conform the understanding, will, and and heart to the scripture, is as much a gift from heaven, as scripture itself.

By poring continually on my sins, and setting them as it were in battle array against the blood of Christ, I hold off my remedy, make little account of the word of God, and must thank myself if I never know peace.

In another man's case, I should certainly think one drop of the blood of Christ sufficient for all his sins, though ever so many and great. In my own, I cannot think so for my life with any degree of steadfastness.

What I speak, think, invent write, as of myself, puffs me up with conceit, and is a sweet morsel for pride. Thinking it to be from God would humble me, as every thing does which we know to be purely a gift, let it come from whom it will.

No music like Aaron's bells. Mercy and propitiation through our great High-Priest, sound sweetly to the purged ear.

At home with God; satisfied and rejoicing only in the sense of his favour, in my heart's choice of him, in the privilege of presenting myself before him in faith, and longing for his promises.

The man who comes to Christ, without any desire or expectation of being created in him unto good works, and having his nature renewed in holiness, is a fool or an infidel. He neither knows nor believes one tittle of the gospel.

We need not be afraid to look on our own deformity, great and ugly as it is. Christ died for the sins of the whole world; and therefore if I had all the sins of the whole wold in my own person, I would not doubt of forgiveness.

The remission of sins, apprehended by faith, is the dissolution or ending of Satan's kingdom in us, and

the beginning, foundation, and principle of a new nature, state, and life in God through Christ.

I cannot give myself to Christ; he must give himself to me.

God does not offer me health, long life, plenty of worldly accommodations, respect, distinction, principalities, universal empire: but, O unutterable grace!—Himself. The greatness of the thing, so infinitely transcending all that we can deserve, hope for, or conceive, overwhelms the understanding, and is apt to stifle our belief of it.

Let God work; my own efforts, by being trusted in, have a tendency to exclude him, and hinder his progress.

The scripture speaks in vain, if God does not speak it again in the heart. Knowing is not willing, though it is generally mistaken for it.

To have God hold the great burning-glass in his hand, to bring all my sins to a point,—how dreadful! and what a glory is then to be seen in Christ!

If I had not sinned as I have, I should never have prayed as I do.

My work is my pleasure, and joyous happy state. I find in it all I want; and do not stretch my thoughts beyond it for more satisfaction from any thing else.

Make no more resolutions to do what you never will; but know your weakness, trust and pray.

Unbelief, or doubting of the power and will of God to convert others, though ever so illiterate or obstinate, self-righteous or wicked, is the same want of faith as it would be in my own case. The obstacle may or may not be greater, but nothing is too hard for God. If we cannot help ourselves to the graces we want, let us not pretend to it, nor make vain efforts in our own strength, but wait patiently on God, and be as clay in the hands of the potter.

Nothing greater can be said of faith, than that it is the only thing which can bid defiance to the accusations of conscience.

Faith supposes that there is sin in every one to be forgiven, and that God is glorified by the forgiveness of it. Deny either, and you lose Christ.

Faith can do more than remove mountains: it can still a clamorous conscience, make a bad conscience good, soften a hard heart, bend a stubborn will, and bring God and man together.

If sin were ten thousand times worse than it is, and I had ten thousand times more sins than I have, I would look beyond them all to Christ.

The Christian is happy in Christ's forgiveness, Christ's righteousness, and Christ's beatitudes; but chiefly so in the two first, and only unhappy because he is imperfect in the last.

In Christ, we are as innocent and clear of all blame before God, as Adam was at his creation. This is the great mystery, great truth, and great comfort, of the gospel; and if it is not true, all scripture is false, or comparatively little worth.

My sins and wants threw me on Christ, when I knew much less of him, and of my need of him, than I do now.

I believe for the remission of sins, I believe for Christ's righteousness, I believe for power to love God and man, I believe for belief; and, God knows, I had rather be a believer than a king.

Christ must have died for me, if there had not been another man in the world: and I believe as much that he died for me, as if there never had been another.

Christ says, "Wilt thou be made whole?" giving me to understand that he must do it; and therefore I will never attempt to make myself whole. I would do something for Christ, but I can do nothing for myself, and he, knowing this, did all for me.

I have been many years endeavouring to come to peace by a conquest of sin, instead of going first to Christ for the pardon of it.

Christ's peace is not freedom from sin, but the

forgiveness of it; and it cannot consist with the love of sin.

If one man had all the graces and good actions that ever were in the world to plead for himself, they would not justify him to God; and if all the sins of all the world were to meet in the person of one man, the blood of Christ would infinitely outweigh them.

If it were not for Christ, conscience would tear me in pieces. Conscience is the most positive, teazing, tormenting thing in the world; and nothing can silence it but faith. Conscience is the viper on Paul's hand; and its nature is to sting, inflame, and kill. Why then do not I swell, or fall down dead? I know.

I know that my sins are a vast heap, and more in number than the hairs of my head, but I will think no more of them, save to deny and try myself, for the remainder of my life. I will look only unto Jesus; and if a better obedience does not spring from this faith and looking, I shall for ever despair of attaining to it. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

It is unbelief altogether, and an absolute denial of the work, satisfaction, and merits of Christ, to think that I have one sin about me unforgiven, or belonging to me.

Thank God for Christ, Christ for a clean conscience, and the Spirit for giving me a sight of it as clean.

Believe that you are a sinner under condemnation, and that Christ released you from it by his death, and then deny him any thing if you can.

As bad as I am, I should be worse if it were not for my belief in the cross.

If I had not God in Christ to think of and speak to, to make me wiser, and better, and happier than I am, and to go to when I die, I should think myself undone.

I find it difficult to believe that God can forgive

me, because I cannot forgive myself. There is great comfort in Isaiah lv. 7, 8; "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

God does not expect to be loved and praised by us but for his benefits, as proofs and tokens of the riches of his nature; and as weak, dependent creatures, we must look up to him for the communications of his goodness, and think ourselves more happy in receiving from him what we want, than if we could give it to ourselves.

He who with a consciousness and acknowledgment of great imperfection, trusts in the righteousness of Christ, is a better Christian than a more perfect man who trusts in his own.

He who does not rejoice in the Lord, and feel God's peace as a cordial at his heart, is a Christian of a low form, and hardly a believer. Why are we so often lumpish, heavy, and almost at our wit's end, but because we look for comfort in ourselves more than in Christ, and do not charge it enough on our souls to rejoice purely, simply, and only in him?

When we have received nothing from God, we think we have enough of our own, and are sufficiently proud of it. What we receive from him, in answer to prayer, under a sense of our poverty, is all placed to the account of grace, and humbles us in the dust.

October 4, 1771; I had a most lively sense, in a dream, of a full dependence on God for help in time of distress, far beyond any thing I ever conceived, or can retain when I am awake.

Look forward to increasing weakness; decay of intellect, sense, and memory; certain pain, sickness, and death; without a wish for past enjoyments, and with a hope full of immortality.

The mercy of God is above all my sins and all my

ars; and when I perceive it in my own mind and nscience to be so, see the necessity of mercy, and yfully embrace the offer of it, "the Spirit beareth itness with my spirit;" and the witness is good ithout and before works, and faith perceives itself y its own light. O Father, sweet is thy mercy! O esus, sweet is thy love! Sweet, O blessed Spirit, thy testimony to the soul!

I see nothing but sin in myself; in God nothing nt mercy.

God put the yoke of the law upon the necks of the ews; the devil puts it on the necks of Christians.

I would not be without direction, restraint, and sistance from God, if I might. Dependence on im is my security, happiness, and great glory. He an do all things well; I am sure I cannot. And ow will my soul exult in his goodness, glow with ratitude, bless and adhere to him, when I know at I am not overlooked, and that he has heard and elped me in the very thing I asked him. I question hether any man ever truly loves and praises God ll he has been so helped.

I will remember my sins, every one if possible, ith all its aggravations; but while there is a Bible the world, they shall not terrify me.

Christ took up all my sins, and bare them in his wn body on the cross; and God cannot punish vice, nor demand a second satisfaction to his justice. ake this comfort from me, and you may take the ible.

If the blood of Christ, as applied for remission, is y remedy in case of sin first and always, it is death make use of any other.

God never pardons one sin, but he pardons all; nd we dishonour him more by not trusting in him r complete forgiveness, than ever we did by sinning gainst him.

When sin past and present, appears in its true ape, with all its horrid malignity and desert of

damnation, then is the time for a full sight of Christ And O how gloriously does the "Sun of Righteousness arise" to the benighted, sin-burdened soul "with healing in his wings!" How sweet is mercy how precious the name of Jesus! and how dear is blood to the awakened guilty conscience! Let i ever be remembered how great the obligation!

With one eye on Christ, I can look my past sin in the face with the other, and be on my guard against all sin for the time to come. Self, in its very best state, is no ground of confidence towards God, no of despair in its worst.

It is the will of God, and well-pleasing to God that I should rejoice continually before him in the acceptance and possession of his grace in Christ as made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

'Nothing can pacify an offended conscience, but that which satisfied an offended God,' says Henry and well may that which satisfied an offended God pacify an offended conscience.

I, N. N. take thee, Jesus, to my wedded husband to have and to hold, from this day forward, for thy love, for thy crosses, for thy work, for thy comfort to love, honour, and obey, so long as I shall live assuredly believing that death will not part us. Lord Jesus, say, Amen.

What a fool am I, to be always laying the weight of my salvation on myself, instead of on Christ.

I should be inexpressibly miserable, if I did not know that God forgives me more easily than I can forgive myself.

I may still look at the brazen serpent; I may look at Christ.

What hope could I have, if God does not forgive what I am, as well as what I have been?

Whenever I feel corruption stirring, and sincerely lament it, but have not strength against it, then the time to fly to Christ, and rejoice in him; the

may I have enough to bless God for, and may well bear with myself.

Remembrance of sin, and sense of redeeming mercy, will be the ground of praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb for ever in heaven. Why should it not be so now, seeing I have as good warrant from the word of God to believe that my sin is wholly taken away, as if I were actually in heaven?

We are apt foolishly and impiously to harden ourselves against the comfort of scripture, by poring continually on our sins. Why man, it is as true that Christ died for sin, as that the wages of sin is death; and it is full as dangerous to disbelieve one as the other.

Those who will not believe the remission of sins on the warrant of scripture, till it is inwardly spoken, or confirmed to them by a personal grant, make no account of God's word, and declare plainly, that they will not trust him without his bond.

If I rightly understood, and truly valued God's gift of Christ, I could not possibly be displeased with him for any thing else.

It is disowning my belief, wronging my soul, and giving the lie to God, to think, but for a moment, that his mercy in Christ is not above all my sins.

Some sins I have forgotten; many I remember, and these so heinous, that I cannot forgive myself for them. It is well for me that God, who forgets none, forgives all.

It is the great miracle, peculiar glory, and most endearing blessed excellence of Christ's religion, that conscience, of all things in the world the most severe and inexorable, should ever be pacified by it, and made good, as it were, in spite of itself.

Only God can bring light out of that darkness which I myself am. I can no more do it myself, than I can say, as he did at the creation, "Let there be light," &c.

The belief of Christ's atonement and imputed

righteousness, seems to be God's way for our attaining any degree of righteousness of our own, or all the inherent and infused righteousness we ever shall be capable of; and if this method is of God's appointing, it is dangerous trusting to any other.

"The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart," and that springing from a good conscience; that is, a conscience purged from the sense of guilt by faith unfeigned. Christ is in this way the wisdom of God, and the power of God, though it seem ever so absurd to the reason of man.

The gospel is a powerful engine for raising the fallen nature of man; but then God must have the working of it.

The remission of sins, apprehended and applied by faith, opens a new kind of intercourse between God and the soul; the veil is rent that barred its entrance into the most holy place, and it now stands continually before God to receive advice, instruction, and all manner of gracious sanctifying influences.

The peculiar doctrines of the gospel, justification by faith, &c. must not only be revealed to us, but in us: and God, therefore, reveals them to us, that we may go to him to have them revealed in us.

When we are wearied and quite spent with working out a righteousness of our own, we cast ourselves with great advantage on Christ for his; and there is then little danger of our being hurt by this doctrine. The sense of such a relief in our time of need, will be instead of a thousand arguments to make us press on to the utmost perfection of holiness we are capable of.

In the presence of temptation, and the stirrings of lust and corruption, what should hinder me from saying "Christ died for the sins of the whole world," and, therefore, for mine, if they were ten thousand times more and greater than they are; and even for those very motions and workings of sin, which I feel

this moment in myself! This is not strengthening or yielding to the temptation, but a confession of my impotence, and inviting the Holy Spirit to flow in on me, and acquiescing in Christ's method for my deliverance! and it is in this sense and belief only that I desire to receive remission of my sins, and an imputed righteousness from his hands.

Lord, have mercy on me, and help me, I am surrounded with enemies, whom I cannot resist but in thy strength, and must fall a prey to them without thy assistance. Suffer not thy name to be dishonoured in the destruction of thy poor creature, and the triumph of the powers of darkness, over thy promise for my salvation. Let the confession of my weakness, and of my dependence on thee, prevail with thee in Christ to stand up in my defence; and do thou get the victory, and be glorified in thyself, and in thy own goodness. Amen.

When faith in Christ, for the remission of sins and the imputation of his righteousness, is God's work in the soul, it operates to holiness, and renews his image in us: when it is man's, it is weak at the best, often delusive, and fixes us in corruption.

That is the best kind of faith, which is productive of the greatest holiness. If man were left to himself, he would be apt to choose that which is productive of the least.

The doctrine of imputed righteousness is founded on the supposition of non-perfection. If we stay for peace of mind and a quiet conscience, till we have earned it by our works, we may stay till doomsday.

We may read, think, reason, be convinced, and willing and glad to acquiesce; but after all, it is hard for any man to believe for the remission of sins, in good earnest, till it is given him of God.

Every thing in religion is God's gift. It is better on all accounts it should be so than otherwise.

Our own attainments are poor at the best, and can yield us *but little comfort*; but the soul, which closes

heartily with God's operations, makes a swift progress under them, and rejoices over them exceedingly as evidences of his favour.

The renovation of the heart by the Spirit, the new man in Christ, charity, &c. is not the ground, cause, or condition, of our acceptance and reward. It is itself our reward, at least in part, and therefore cannot be the cause of itself. Thus Abraham's having a son was the consequence of his faith; an additional superabundant grace or favour of God to him; the thing indeed he wanted, but surely not on the footing of merit. If St. Paul had said that all the services and shining qualities of the highest angels were of no value, and would profit them nothing without charity; would this imply that their having it was their title to God's favour, and to their high rank in the order of creation? It would be the ornament of their nature, and a necessary qualification for their proper happiness; but still the gift of God, and no more their merit than their being is. I believe we see at once the horrid presumption of such a claim in them.

And yet wretched man is not to be driven from the plea of his own merit. Man will do something, if not all, for himself; he will earn his salvation, either in whole or in part. It is the great gospel mystery to acquaint us that the attempt is vain, and that if ever we are saved, it must be by grace.

Those who deny salvation by faith alone, do not pretend to say that it is by works alone, but partly by faith and partly by works, and they will accept of Christ to make good deficiencies. But they might as well make sure work of it, and take him for all; for their very best works, it is to be feared, will make but a sorry appearance; and, consequently, their own persons, when tried in the balance, be found miserably wanting.

There is no more absurdity in trusting wholly to Christ, than there is in trusting to him only in part? *to his* atonement and righteousness, than to his

atonement only; or his atonement and righteousness in part. Man wants him in all his offices and benefits; divided, he can be of no service to us, and he will never be content to go halves with our pride.

Faith is the means of attaining to the Spirit, and the Spirit is the spring of our power and possibility of working. Faith, in this view and embraced for this end, will stand its ground against all opposition. There can be no pretence for decrying it as an enemy to good works.

The mystery of the gospel, as distinguished from the law, consists in changing the order of two words; one says, "Do and live;" the other says, "Live and do."

One would think that a poor labourer, sweating out his term of threescore years and ten to half-starve a hungry family, though as ignorant of spirituals and as unconcerned about them as a brute, was better employed, and in a higher state of purgation, than a monk at his offices; nevertheless the scripture makes no allowances, when it says, "This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." And if reason were allowed to bring in its exceptions, they would be endless.

It is impossible for a considerate person to think himself safe on the foundation of his own works. The consequence is plain—we have then nothing to trust to but an act of grace from God, or something that is not our own. And yet, by a strange perverseness, when the only proper relief is proposed to us, we naturally reject it, either in whole or in part.

The law, not performed, drives us to Christ for remission; and Christ received, brings us back again to the law, with all possible advantage for performance; for he came "not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it."

If we knew the gospel to be what it is, and what the angels, who must know, said it was, viz. "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good-will

towards men;" or, a full discharge from all guilt and blame; and from the bond of the law, as a covenant—we should be apt to say of it, It is too good news to be true.

The mercy of God in the forgiveness of our sins, can never be understood or believed, can be no motive of love, gratitude, and obedience, till we know the extent of our obligation in a full conviction of our demerits. But this can never be, so long as we pride ourselves on the rectitude of our nature, and stand on the false bottom of a few moral performances.

We believe in order to be holy, and therefore need not to be holy in order to our believing. It is a denial of the gospel to suppose that we must be changed from sin to holiness, before we may venture on Christ for his salvation. Then faith is unnecessary, and no longer the foundation of holiness. And if we can thus change ourselves, we can do all without Christ and his Spirit. Horace's 'sunt verba et voces,' &c. is a vain boast. Cicero's offices and the divine Plato can do me no good. Christ "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," is the religion I want.

I cannot love my neighbour as myself, till I love God with all my heart. I cannot love God but from a sense of his love to me in the forgiveness of my sins! and I cannot receive forgiveness from him as a benefit till I know my want of it.

To say that we are justified by works, is saying that we are justified by sin. Put the good actions of the best men into one scale, and their bad into another, and see whether the latter will not preponderate. And if so, the result is sin.

It is to be supposed that those who talk of being justified by works, separate all imperfection and alloy of evil from their good ones, and leave the bad quite out of the account.

I am convinced with the greatest fulness of assu-

rance, and by an inward feeling above all demonstration, that nothing can help me in my spiritual recovery but God. And my recovery, in any tolerable degree, will be as full a proof to me of his help as the world is of his being. This is the sensibility I wish for; and if I can acquiesce in any thing less, all other marks will be fallacious.

Whenever I die, I die a sinner; but by the grace of God, penitent, and, I trust, accepted in the Beloved.

I have some degree of power over my outward man, but little over my inward. I can make a shift to be just, to do acts of kindness and humility, and put on a show of courtesy and civility; but the bent of my heart is still the same. I can no more love God with all my heart, or come up to St. Paul's description of charity, than I can reach heaven with my hands. In this point of view, what a reasonable aid is gospel power! and how exactly is the religion of the Bible suited to the wants of mankind, in its offers of forgiveness and renovation.

That same law which we cannot bear as a yoke on our necks, we survey with pleasure, and take up willingly, when it lies at our feet.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone, could never stand its ground long at a time. This is to me a proof of its truth and excellent tendency. It is not at all for the purpose of a corrupt world; and therefore it is no wonder that it should be rejected, as often as it makes its appearance.

Sinful man, saved in Christ, always was, and always will be, a mystery. But where is the mystery of our being saved by an inherent righteousness? O why does sinful man for ever dispute against his remedy, and return to "the beggarly elements of the world," the flesh, and the powers of nature, when the mercy of God is so plainly declared, and so fully made over to him, as the only help and comfort? St. Paul *told the Jews* of his day, that justification

was by faith only, and not by the works of the law. Suppose now they had understood this assertion of the ceremonial law, as many have done since, might they not very justly have said, 'Neither do we look to be justified, or accepted with God for our observation of the ceremonial part of the law, but for our obedience to the whole law, and especially the moral!' It is plain therefore, that St. Paul, in speaking of this matter, always means the whole law, *rotunde* as Martin Luther says; or else the dispute between them would soon have been at an end. He would only have affirmed what they never denied.

Did Christ die for small matters? for trifling frailties? Few are willing to charge themselves with more. Or is St. Paul's representation of human nature true? and if it is, where are the believers? and what a blot does our pride make of the whole gospel!

We must either think of God as a reconciled Father, or groundlessly presume on his mercy, or be under continual dread of his justice. The first of these is the Christian state, the second is a state of dangerous security, the last is a slavish state, full of fears and terrors, and, if we think of God at all, will destroy the comfort of our lives.

Redemption by the blood of Christ (mark it well, O my soul!) is the groundwork of the majestic triumphant song of praise in heaven, Rev. v. 9; and a disposition to join in it, our chief capacity for, and actual happiness in, time and eternity.

Dung and prune a bad tree to all eternity, it can bring forth no other than fruit of its own kind. Understanding this, is understanding the gospel.

We are justified all at once, without law, and in spite of law; and for no other reason, but because Christ died for us. When we are settled in this belief, law and conscience are on good terms again.

Christ saves us from the sentence of condemnation

we pronounce on ourselves; if we leave it to him to pronounce, nothing can save us.

If ever we come to Christ, it must be conscious of our own blindness, and with all our distempers about us. He is not so absurd as to bid us first heal ourselves, and then come to him for a cure. Staying till we can bring some kind of fitness or worthiness of our own along with us, is gross misapprehension, if not total unbelief, and hinders many from ever coming to him at all.

If I were to live to the world's end, and do all the good that man can do, I must still cry, Mercy! Why then should I be unwilling or afraid to die this moment, with a sense of God's pardoning love, when I can have no other claim to salvation, if I were to live for ever?

One would think it is but tolerably modest to say that God knows the way to heaven better than we do, and that it is lawful for him to prescribe to us the terms of our admission into it; and yet there is no proposition more generally ridiculed.

The knowledge of my sin, and of God's love in the forgiveness of it, is my preparation for loving and obeying him; why then should I be afraid to take the measure of my sin, since it is to be the measure of my love and activity?

When we come to understand the nature and extent of Christian morals, we see at once the necessity of remission and of divine help. These are the two material points of difference between Christianity and all the sects of paganism. The Stoics, who spoke excellently of virtue, and were the most introverted sect, were withal self-sufficient.

Conscious of my weakness, or rather deadness, I offer myself to God to be his workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" but finding that I can never have a righteousness of my own, so complete as to be worthy of his acceptance, I offer up Jesus Christ daily and hourly on the altar of my

heart, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; beseeching God that it may be in the true fire of repentance and faith kindled by the eternal Spirit.

What makes a happy life? Knowing that we can smile on death.

Human perfection is reality of desire and sincerity of endeavour, and that in Christ is accepted. Perfect righteousness was attained only by Christ, and that is imputed. These are two joyful truths of our religion; and I know of no other that can quiet the soul, or carry it on with so swift a progress towards real holiness.

The righteousness of God, Rom. x. 3, is no kind or degree of our own, however acquired, either before or after faith and the new birth; but that which God bestows in and with Christ. The righteousness of God according to the terms, must be absolutely and every way complete; but who can think this of his own in the highest and best state of it?

I am sure God will not put me into a great fire, if a little one will do.

It is the property of faith, first to empty the soul, and then to fill it with comfort, and strengthen it for duty. At the same time that I see sin in the shape of a fury, I see it nailed to the cross.

If God sees me in Christ, I cannot be in full possession of the truth without seeing myself there.

All my earthly happiness, quietness, and assurance, is from the knowledge and belief of Jesus and hope of his salvation; but I have not a thousandth part of the joy I should have, if I delighted in him, and loved him in some proportion to his excellence, benefits, and love to me, and lived wholly for him.

I am as far off as ever by resolving and attempting, in my own strength, to do what I cannot. All depends on prayer, patient waiting, and receiving. Psalm cxxxi.

I go to Christ with faith for faith.

One touch of Christ makes him mine, with all he is and is. In him I am well beloved, clear of all ame, and perfectly righteous. All comes with this ith—love, fidelity, gratitude, pure obedience,— ithout it, nothing.

It is a most reviving, transporting thought, that ith makes me as clean from all spot of sin, as pure id perfectly white, as a saint in heaven; and if I not believe in Christ, chiefly for this, what do I lieve in him for?

What have I to do, on the peril of my soul, but to ke God at his word; to lay all my sins down at the ot of the cross; and then prostrate myself there in mble adoration, pure love, and the most sincere ofessions of fidelity to my crucified Saviour?

He who has already done so much for me, will ave nothing undone.

Cordial, perfect closing with the will of God, from root of faith and lively sense of Christ's peace, to whatever he commands, to avoid what he forbids, suffer what he ordains, will be a step to heaven; d I shall then know on what plan life should have en conducted, and what happiness I have lost.

"The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not ." The Lord speaks this to me as much as he did David; and though I do not always apprehend it th the same degree of clearness or height of assrance, yet the scripture always say it to me; and ught never to disbelieve the word of God so much for a moment.

The love of God in Christ, apprehended by faith, ll give me an understanding, a heart, a tongue. an's sin is God's glory in the forgiveness of it by rist; and God's forgiveness is man's eternal ame, if he continues to sin against it.

Forgiveness of sin by the death of Christ, is a ason why we should never forgive ourselves.

Every man is, what he once was and always will

be without an interest in Christ, a condemned sinner, notwithstanding any repentance or future obedience.

It is the joy of my heart that I am freed from guilt, and the desire of my heart to be freed from sin.

I see plainly that such a one has better qualities than I have. But if I am more a believer, I have a much better righteousness than any man can have in himself.

"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." I do say that Jesus is the Lord; therefore I say it by the Holy Ghost. This reasoning would set a world of souls at ease, who are perplexed about the reality of their faith. They cannot deny the second member of the syllogism, but will not be persuaded that they have a faith of the Spirit's operation, because it has not been given them in some sensible manner, or because it is sometimes assaulted with doubts, or because they cannot prove it by a higher measure of holiness. Query, what is that measure of holiness which must prove our faith? and whether any thing can prove it but itself?

Either there is such a thing as predestination to life, accompanied with a perfect renovation of heart, mind and will, and then I do not find that I am of the number of the elect, as having no such experience; or I may hereafter attain to the perfection of the predestinated; or Christ apprehended by faith is a safe ground of hope, with imperfection, a great remainder of sin, and low degrees of holiness in himself. In the last only I have comfort; and a blessed hope it is, if I do not make it a pretence for sloth, or acquiescence in my present state.

Faith is trust in the promises of God for eternity.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOOD WORKS.

s the hardest thing in the world not to think our
i works better than they are, and to make the
r best keep their distance in the office of justifica-
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ur actions, yet we shall not be saved for them.
oubtless God takes care to qualify his faithful
ants for the happiness he intends for them;
ch is the enjoyment of himself. And there can
o other possible qualification for this happiness,
capacity of receiving and enjoying it, but holi-
; that is to say, a full bent of soul towards
, and a hearty love and liking of all that he is,
, wills, and ordains. But then we must not
end to bring this holiness to account, as the
nd of our acceptance. A person who is con-
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e make our holiness, whatever it is, to be in any
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r best state we ever shall arrive at will be
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ss, advantage, and encouragement, for the prac-
of good works, and can never be made a handle

for sloth or licentiousness, when it is preceded by repentance, as, if received in faith, it necessarily must be. Whoever entertains it as a pretence or excuse for not working or doing his best, is still impenitent and unbelieving, let him think what he will.

God makes himself a debtor to man, for his own goodness in man.

He that has once felt the peace of God in the remission of sins, will hardly stop short, or make it a handle for sloth or licentiousness. This would be as if a man were travelling to a certain country, and having by some means or other got a taste of its excellent fruits, should make it a pretence for going no farther, or for turning back again.

It is well said, that though faith justifies us, yet works must justify our faith.

Justification by sanctification is man's way to heaven, and it is odds but he will make a little serve the turn. Sanctification by justification is God's, and he fills the soul with his own fulness.

The maintainers of imputed righteousness must be content to undergo the mortification of being thought opposers or discouragers of good works, though they constantly plead for them, and for their own doctrine, as the best, if not the only sure way of attaining to them; do not come a whit behind their adversaries in the performance of them; and perform them more freely and sincerely, and on more generous principles of love, gratitude, and obedience, than those who venture all on their own actions, and make them the ground of their acceptance.

I trust to Christ for sanctification, and not to sanctification for Christ. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." But then holiness is not the foundation of our reward. It is itself God's gift to us, in order to qualify us for our proper happiness, and as the grand means of enjoying him, and therefore cannot in any sense be the procuring meritorious

cause of it. But nevertheless it is, by this kind of reasoning, every way as necessary as if it were.

God pardons in order to cleanse. Whoever expects forgiveness without any thought or desire of being cleansed, cannot receive it. It is impossible for God to forgive an unrepenting sinner; and he does not repent, who does not purpose and wish to be changed.

I know and believe that all I am, have, or can be, without charity, is nothing; but I do not believe in charity for my acceptance with God.

Every other faith but that which apprehends Christ as a purifier, as well as our atonement and righteousness, is false and hypocritical. He can only be received into the soul, when he is desired for his goodness; and when he is there, he will not sit down idle.

We are accepted in Christ in the performance of good works, and not for them.

What motive to goodness is there in all nature so forcible as the love of God in the forgiveness of our sins? And what fitness can any one possibly have in himself for works or working, on whom it will not operate?

It is next to impossible to do good actions, merely because they are good, till we are in possession of that principle so strenuously asserted by Martin Luther, viz. that our salvation is wholly of faith; and that good works are only a ground of comfort, as proofs of our faith, but signify nothing to our acceptance with God. And what a glorious recommendation of faith is this, that it is the only thing that makes way for the truth of obedience, from a pure motive of love; our own interest in all the good we do, according to this notion, being quite out of the question!

It is impossible for a proud man to have so much as one virtue. He wants the very essence of all virtue, viz. disinterestedness and a pure love of rectitude.

A person who believes in the righteousness of Christ, may truly say, "Lord, what love have I unto thy law!" The law is necessary as a rule, and amiable as a free service, and performable in the power of faith; but as exacting strict obedience under the penalty of death, it is a heavy load on the conscience; and, in that sense, it is abolished to make way for a better dispensation.

A virtue wrought out of the stock of our own ideas, in our own strength, that is merely human or pagan, is without foundation, has no reality, and can contribute nothing to our happiness. What, for instance, is the greatest affability and condescension, without a root of true humility; forbearance of the outward act, without inward purity; patience without thankfulness; beneficence without love; and especially, what is zeal for religion, or exactness in a form, if it does not spring from a heart devoted to God, and relinquishing all for communion with him? But I am sensible, and know with the utmost certainty, that I can no more give these qualities to myself, in their inward deep ground, than I could make a world.

Christ's cross, truly believed, will have two seemingly different effects—it will put me on being as good as ever I can, and make me sensible that I am altogether vile.

There can be no true religion without love, no love of man without love of God, nor love of God without the knowledge and love of Christ.

All virtue which does not spring from the cross of Christ, is defective in some respect or other; and most horribly in overrating itself.

It is the duty of every Christian to aim at perfection, and to be going on to it; but he is a very ill-informed Christian, if not a downright unbeliever, who depends on it for salvation.

Faith goes before salvation, and works follow it; not to be made the ground of our justification, but

as the necessary concommitants and proper fruits of faith; and whenever obedience puts itself in the place of faith, St. Paul's words may fitly be applied to it, "Know that thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." Why then are works to be the great subject of inquiry at the day of judgment? Because they are the visible effects of faith, and only good as springing from a root of faith, so that the want of them proves of course the want of faith.

The life of faith can only spring from faith, as trees and plants do from their proper seeds. The generality know better what their work is, than where to begin it.

If I have faith in Christ, I shall love him; if I love him, I shall keep his commandments: if I do not keep his commandments, I do not love him; if I do not love him, I do not believe in him.

A believer does not do good works to be saved by them, but in love to others, from a root of faith, and because he is saved. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Love of Christ for what he is, as made known unto us by what he has done and suffered for us, is first; and keeping the commandments is not for salvation, but because we are saved by him. Whatever we do on this ground is well-pleasing to God, and will have its reward; but it is abomination in his sight, if we would obtrude it on him as perfect in itself, and as a full satisfaction to the demands of his law.

It would be a great abuse of the doctrine of salvation by faith, and a state of dangerous security, to say, If it pleases God to advance me to a higher, or the highest degree of holiness, I should have great cause of thankfulness, and it would be the very joy of my heart; but nevertheless I can do without it, as being safe in Christ: whereas, there is no safety without an entire submission to the will of God.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

THE great mistake of life, and the cause of all the wickedness and misery in the world, is looking for happiness here, and especially in externals, where it never will be found. If we were in a state of diligent preparation and patient waiting for it in another life, we should have nothing to scramble or quarrel for, nor ever be disappointed; we should be freed at once from all vain anxiety; bear crosses, help one another in love, rejoice in hope, and welcome death.

"The things which God hath prepared for them that love him," are according to the revelation of his nature and will in Jesus Christ. In this belief, study to know him more and more, and make him your treasure and portion, and long for the everlasting enjoyment of him.

In heaven we shall have a perfect knowledge of sin, far beyond any thing we conceive of it, in conjunction with the greatness of our deliverance; and the glory of redeeming mercy will be the eternal ground of our love and admiration. On earth it is the great exercise of faith, and one of the hardest things in the world, to see sin and Christ at the same time, or to be penetrated with a lively sense of our desert, and of our absolute freedom from condemnation. But the more we know of both, the nearer approach we shall make to the state of heaven; and we are ever

greatest enemies, if, together with the fullest comprehension of sin and the deepest humiliation for it, we do not look unto Jesus, and see it taken away by the Lamb of God.

He is the greatest saint on earth, who feels his poverty most in the want of perfect holiness, and longs with the greatest earnestness for the time when he shall be put in full possession of it.

Before you do any thing pleasing to the flesh, be sure that you have God's leave; and whatever he commands, though ever so unpleasant to the flesh, be sure to do it. Make a grievance of nothing but sin.

Christ will accept nothing at my hands till I give him my heart; and when I do, I shall not give him mites, though one will be well taken.

Nothing can be happiness to us but what we think so; and yet thinking any thing to be happiness does not make it so. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to us to be well-informed in the matter.

Repent and believe; believe and love; love and obey; obey in love, and be as happy as you can be in this world.

Temptations are not sins, but means of perfection or causes of strengthening the will; and they are thrown in our way, that we may resist them in the fear of God, conquer in his help, and increase our reward.

If I prefer any thing in my heart to God and his will, my whole state and being, every thought, word, and work is sinful.

God's coming and presence in the soul, is best understood by the power of it in the change it works in us.

It is a day lost indeed, in which I lose ground in the way to heaven.

When my will is united to God's I shall always have what I want. What hinders me from being thus *religious and happy*?

I have had but little thought or purpose of employing the talents which God has given me solely to his glory. Whenever I do this with a single eye to please him, I need not be concerned what they are, one or ten, and shall be indifferent about the esteem of the world.

What has God for me to do to-day? I am not to live to myself. So I should have thought all my life, and every day of my life? doing my work faithfully, praising God for appointing it, and desiring no other happiness.

He who is Christ's free-man, is made such by Christian faith and obedience: he is heaven-taught, Spirit-led, has a single desire to know and please God better, is aiming at perfection, and grieving for nothing so much as the want of it.

A Christian is strong in resolution, fervent in his desire of holiness, and makes the most violent efforts to attain it; but at the same time he knows that it is absolutely out of his own power; and, therefore depends on God for support, and keeps close to him in prayer for constant supplies of light, grace, and comfort.

If God says, Thou shalt not; a child of God says at once, I will not, in spite of strength of inclination, or violence of temptation. If God says, Thou shalt; he says, in spite of custom, difficulty, or danger, I will. This is freedom, this is happiness, this is life and power from God, of which we may be as sure as that we did not make ourselves.

Enjoy the day in the day, without stretching your thoughts to some future time, and live to-day so as to enjoy to-morrow; but do not deceive yourselves with hopes of much enjoyment from any day.

God's design is to bring us happily to himself in another world, and he will leave no means unessayed for this purpose. If we have the same end in view, and look up to him, as carrying it on steadily for us, we may be happy both here and hereafter; if we have

not, the consequence must necessarily be despondency, vexation, and fretfulness at the ways of Providence.

The will of God is my pole-star, and, with my eye constantly on it, I shall be carried safely through all storms and tempests.

I am not sure of the present hour. I am sure that I have nothing to do with any thing else.

Bearing with thyself in the want of spiritual strength, or absence of spiritual comfort, is neither more nor less than bearing with God, and the effect of no common grace.

. Without the enjoyment of conscience I can have no other.

. The Spirit in the children of God, is like an organ; one man is one stop; another, another; the sound is different, the instrument the same, but music in all.

. Whatever opposes God in my heart, or keeps him out of it, must be abhorred and cast out. The opposition is strong, and the work difficult, and we see at once that it can only be done with divine help. It is the excellence of Scripture to offer this help, and call us to make use of it.

Head-knowledge is our own, and can polish only the outside; heart-knowledge is the Spirit's work, and makes all glorious within. Nothing is well done in our spiritual building, but what is done with prayer and God's help. Fight and pray. Fly and pray.

Thank God for laying his command on my heart, and for disposing my heart to delight in it.

When we feel no burden, and complain of no want but that of entire sanctification, life will be a continual dying, and death welcome.

When we obey the will of God from the heart, we stand before him, as the angels do, in the original glory and full blessing of our natures; and so far as we come short of this, we come short of happiness. Is this a dying thought?

All think they mean well: and by an egregious

piece of self-flattery they take it for granted that our defect of good lies not in the will but the ability. Just the reverse: if the will is good, we are good.

Purity of heart, mind, and conscience, does not consist in freedom from temptation or total insensibility, but in abstinence from the outward act of sin, and suppression of all inward motions and tendencies to it, in the fear of God, and with a steady choice of his will. I shall be a happy man, and possess consciousness of help from above in answer to prayer, when I am determined at all events for the will of God. Show me where the will of God is, I know where pleasure is. Sensuality will not do, gross or refined. Nothing can support my spirits, or enable me to pass through the world with any degree of constant satisfaction, but walking with God, in the faith of Christ, as a reconciled Father, doing his will, under his eye, with his help, acquiescing in this state of mind, looking no farther, desiring no other riches, living for no other end.

If we long truly for God, he has given us a great deal in that longing! and if he makes us wait now, he will make us full amends hereafter. O Jesus, call me to God by thy cross, thy love, thy Spirit, and then call me home!

O for a steady will to think and do all with a sole regard to the eye of God, and with great indifference for the esteem or censure of any man living.

In case of sin allowed or weakly resisted, the conscience will not be quieted with hopes and promises; no, nor with the blood of Christ.

The more faith, the less conscience of sin and less servile fear; the less conscience of sin, the more consciousness and lively sensibility of its odious cursed nature.

Time flies fast, but conscience should keep pace with it.

Press on, in the name and strength of God, to an assured victory.

The heart is due to God. Oh what joy, ease, and freedom, when I can say it is God's, for his love, for Christ's sake, by the Spirit's power! No enjoyment but in God, or God's work. Oh for the pure heart and the single eye?

It is a hard thing for a real Christian, fearing and striving against all sin, to be patient with it, in submission to the divine will; but what can we do, if God is pleased to suffer it in us, as he does for wise purposes, to humble us, to convince us of our dependence, to keep us close to Christ? So St. Paul exulted in the grace of God, and could defy remaining corruption to condemn him, Rom. vii. The moment we think that we have no sin, we shall desert Christ.

We may know by our affection to the Sabbath, whether eternity will be forced on us.

If it pleases God to endue me with spiritual wisdom, I shall from henceforth pay a greater regard to the teaching of my Lord, and have no treasure but in heaven, no heart but for heaven.

The great mistake of life is self-pleasing, or looking for a state of rest and satisfaction here, not only in sensual gratification, but even in the way of religion, instead of taking up the cross, labour in duty, and submission to the will of heaven, with a renunciation of all worldly schemes of happiness, and patient waiting for death to put us in possession of it. The only happiness of this world is preparing in it for another, and being content without it till death.

To think and act, to be as much disengaged in respect of N. N. and as necessarily drawn to seek happiness elsewhere, as if there were no such person in the world—the work is great, and the time is short, but what cannot God do?

I never was happy till I knew that I could not be happy in this world, and consented to wait for it till God's time and place. This thought will keep me from all self-pleasing in forbidden ways; reconcile

me to sufferings, crosses, injuries, mortifications; and put a smile on the face of death.

Religion does not consist in a point. The soul that has entered into the true spirit of it, is never satisfied with its attainments, but continually presses on to greater heights, and notwithstanding the greatest abundance of graces received, is still craving, thinks itself poor, and utterly unworthy of any reward. This is humility and poverty of spirit. Pride will carry a man to heaven's gate, but nothing but humility will find admission.

"He that is not with me," says our Saviour, "*is* against me." Mere indifference to good is evil.

The truest mortification, and the surest tests of a real disposition to be mortified, are those which we receive from others and from God. Self-mortification, or crosses of our own choosing, are often only a more refined species of pride and self-will.

The world slides into our hearts by the avenues of sense, in cases we little think of. There may be danger in giving ourselves up fully to a warm sunshine, or the pleasures of a beautiful landscape. This may be thought morose indeed; but let the militant soul be on its guard.

I may cheat myself and others with a counterfeit appearance of virtue, or rather keep under the contrary appearance by continual acts of violence; but the reality of it and of all our graces, can only spring from a *nature*. Consciousness of our want of this nature, and sensible concern for it, is the beginning of religion or repentance; patient waiting on God for it, according to Christ, is the progress of religion, or faith and hope; and the actual receiving of it is the end of religion, or charity. The man who has the Spirit of God and of Christ, is spiritual, redeemed, a Christian, the child of God, and has in him the nature and life of heaven and eternity. The man who has no other spirit than his own, though ever so learned, rational and regular in his behaviour, is carnal,

sensual, earthly, the child of death, and stands in the kingdom of darkness: the tree is corrupt, and the fruit corrupt, though they appear ever so beautiful. This doctrine is of the very essence and life-blood of Christianity, and nothing can be plainer, or more full to the purpose, than St. Paul's assertion, Rom. viii. 9. But it is a terrible mystery to fleshly wisdom, and will for ever be the subject of debate and contradiction.

Sanctification is a gift; and the business of man is to desire, receive, and use it. But he can by no act or effort of his own, produce it in himself. Grace can do every thing; nature nothing.

When my appetite is weak, squeamish, or vitiated, I know it is a symptom of decay and bodily disorder; and is not the want or deprivation of spiritual appetite, the same indication of debility and great disorder in the soul?

In temporals, riches is power; in spirituals, poverty.

It is a terrible mortification to a serious man, to find the evil spirit still in possession, after he had thought it entirely gone. But withal it affords a happy conviction of our impotence, as well as inbred corruption, and will lead in time, with hearty repentance and true faith, to that friendly power from whence cometh our help.

It is with the soul as with the stomach; there must be a healthy constitution of both, to digest and assimilate their respective food.

Meekness of wisdom compels, where reason cannot persuade.

When we quit our hold of the creature and of earthly enjoyments, what is there left for us to stay on? What can make us amends for the want of them? Is there any thing beside that we can feel, relish, and feed on with delight? Yes; faith, hope, and charity. These are a blessed resource to the soul; and it is the choice and possession of these

that constitute a Christian and the Christian happiness.

When we once come to know and believe in good earnest, that there is a peace with God to be had, and that it is the very thing we want, it will make us cool in all other pursuits.

There is great folly and presumption in comparing ourselves with others, or despising any man. We may be worse than others, when we think ourselves better. Possibly we neither know them nor ourselves. If we are really better, the difference is not from ourselves; and, whatever they may be, our own want of humility is certainly a most terrible defect.

I desire the Spirit of God above and beyond all other possessions, interests, satisfactions, or enjoyments; both as a controlling principle, discernible in its effects, and enabling me to command myself and all my powers for God; and as a distinct inward feeling or consciousness, and foretaste of the heavenly happiness. I think both are held forth in scripture, and the one can hardly be without the other in any heart.

There is no possibility of happiness, but in the possession of our own choice, will, and desire; and the will of man, in his present condition, stands bent against the order and will of God. What is to be done? and whose will must be changed? The concurrence of our wills with the will of God, is our rectitude and happiness; their opposition, our corruption and misery.

The first man fell by withdrawing his will from the will of God. By nature we stand in the same state of separation, and are perpetually acting his revolt over again, and can only be restored by the reduction of our wills to the order of God's.

Peace with God, and peace with all the world, and with all nature. See Hos. ii. 18. and the parallel places.

How happy is the soul that has got above the pre-

valence of earthly hopes and fears, desires and relishes; and can, on good grounds, consider itself as a child of God's family and kingdom, promoting its interests, partaking of its blessings, only influenced by its expectations, and waiting for death as the door of admission to all its enjoyments.

If I give myself to the creature in any such way as I know to be forbidden, I must not think that I can approach God, or that he will meet me in prayer. Every attempt of that kind is an act of self-deceit and hypocrisy.

Abstaining from evil is nothing, without an actual turning to God in Christ, and tending to him with the bent of my will and desire, as the rest, centre, and life, of my spirit. This change constitutes the idea of religion, is the great work we have to transact with God, and should be the basis of all our prayers.

When once I am in Christ, as a living member of his body, and so joined to him as to be one spirit, I am, in a qualified sense, what he was; have the benefit of what he did; and shall be what he is.

Nothing but a persuasion of our title to God's favour, and consequently to a happy eternity, can make us desire and seek after it in good earnest, and order all our affairs with a view to it. It is the great design of the Christian religion, and the peculiar tendency of its distinguished doctrines, to possess and fill our minds with this persuasion.

Religion is seeking after the gracious presence of God in the soul; and finding him, there is salvation or heaven begun. Those who have experienced the two states of nature and grace, know the difference to be as great as between heaven and earth.

With regard to what I read or think, the question should be, Is it really interesting? Will such a speculation improve me in religious knowledge, or bring me nearer to God? If it will not, discard it at once.

Holiness is happiness. They are to each other

cause and effect, and one necessarily produces the other, at least more than any thing else can do. But what passes in the world of virtue, is an arrant counterfeit. And I believe very few of those who pretend to it, either expect or desire to be any better for it inwardly.

Christ would be loved for all he did, and for all he is; and we cannot love him for one, without loving him for the other. The sense of his benefits will be in proportion to the sense we have of our own sinfulness, which cannot be without an earnest desire to be delivered from it.

Seeking after God for himself, is the renewed mind, the single eye, the pure heart, the birth of the Spirit. Seeking after him for any thing but himself, is not seeking him sincerely.

True goodness is universal and uniform, when it is God's life and nature in us; like God, without partiality or respect of persons. No virtue, merely human, can stand this test.

He who can say, 'I am so weary of sin, as to be weary of life, and even long to put off that flesh which is the seat of it,' says a great deal, though he may still labour under many imperfections.

Never turn aside from any command for the cross that is in it, for that is the very thing that makes it a blessing, and the means of spiritual improvement. The Holy Ghost is most, if not only, a comforter, in the absence or contempt of worldly comforts. It seems better to take the measure of our state from a real change of desires, and continual progress towards perfection, than from any sensible communications, joyous feelings, or high raptures. When men are taught to expect these, as the great marks and seals of their adoption, the pride of some will soon help them to a competent share of them; whilst others, less bold, and not willing to outrun their own experience, will be thrown into grievous perplexities.

The new birth is our being received by the will of

God into a new state of being, to the remission of sins by faith, to a participation of Christ's perfect righteousness, to a renovation of will by the Holy Ghost. And this life proves itself, as every other kind of life does, by its natural and proper acts, by contrition, by prayer, by love, and by a continual progress in holiness. Spiritual comforts, if eagerly desired and rested in, may keep us from God as well as earthly ones.

We greatly deceive ourselves by thinking we are and have what we know, or that we can be made wise and holy by other men's words and notions. Whereas all divine wisdom and real sanctity arises from within, from the Spirit of God working at the root, and is, by evolution, as a plant from its seed. Every step we take higher in the kingdom of grace, we necessarily sink so much lower in our own esteem.

When I can bear opposition, calumny, contempt, hatred, and all manner of ill usage, as infinitely less than my deserts, I may possibly be meek, but not before. The religion of the gospel is conversion by the power of God; therefore whatever is mere nature, or the effect of natural power, necessarily comes short of it.

If we took but the same care of our inward dispositions, from a sense of God's presence, as we do of our outward deportment before an earthly superior, we should soon be prepared for his most searching operations.

If I resign myself to the Spirit, it must be with a full resolution to do and suffer a great deal. He will not take me in hand on any other terms.

Nothing can make life pleasant, but some kind of acquiescence in the present hour; from a consciousness that we are in it according to the order of God, either doing or suffering his will, or at least not acting contrary it.

It seems to be the great controversy among the

better sort of people at all times, whether a decent moral life, together with a profession of faith in Christ, and a regularity of outward worship, is the religion of the gospel; or a heart devoted to God, sensible of his communications, and inwardly changed in the bent of its desires and affections; or, in other words, whether true religion is not altogether a work of God on the soul, distinctly known and felt in its several stages of repentance, faith, and charity. The latter opinion is commonly called enthusiasm; but the former certainly is so, as being a false ground of trust in God: but no man ever was deceived in the main by the other. He is and has all that religion requires of him, even though he should be mistaken in ascribing too much to inward sensations and divine experiences.

One credible person steadily bearing testimony to the power of divine grace, in his own conversion, will have a greater effect in converting others, than the most learned and eloquent declaration of the same truth from a thousand unconverted preachers, 1 John i. 1.

It is the worst kind, and highest form of pride, to think of being a Christian or spiritual in any other way, or by any other means, than that by which the poorest and most illiterate man on earth is made such, viz. by the sole power of the Holy Ghost.

It will be a blessed time when I can go into all companies with the simplicity of a man in Christ; speaking the truth in love, undauntedly, and yet fearful of offending.

Christian morals, or rather renovation, is a glorious idea, and it fills one with rapture to think that it is promised, and attainable, though not fully in this life.

What is misfortune? whatever separates us from God. What, a blessing? every means of approximation to him. No right opinions, clearness of comprehension, or fulness of belief in religious matters,

signify any thing to our conversion and establishment, unless they are from God.

The crosses and mortifications we meet with from others, are a precious means of humbling, instructing, and improving us; we should be undone without them.—Madam Guyon carries this so far as to say, that if we had nobody about us to plague and vex us, God would send an angel from heaven to do it.

With the help of God, I will neither suffer the devil to lurk behind the cross, nor hide it from me.

What will it profit me to be always thinking of Christ, and forming acts of resignation to him, but never doing any thing for him?

The spirit does not only confer and increase ability, and so leave us to ourselves in the use of it; but every single act of spiritual life is the Spirit's own act in us.

I am resolved, with the grace of God, to forgive every body every thing, and myself nothing.

Is what I know and feel of spiritual things the result of a new nature, or of the old only under a different form, and feeding on different comforts?

O what shifts, what multiplicity of miserable inventions, to quiet the poor soul, and create to ourselves the paradise we have lost in some kind or other of a worldly life! when it can only be regained in God, and in the full restoration of the heart to him in love and obedience through Christ.

We can never arrive at any true settlement, by propping ourselves up with the opinions or experiences of others. Rest must be the result of our own fellowship with God. Our religion, for the most part, is nothing but the prophet Jeremiah's stolen words, Jer. xxiii. 30.

"Thou art my portion, O Lord!" Behold here the test of rectitude, of happiness, of a Christian. Speak this truly, O my heart, and all that is within me, or I am undone for ever.

Whenever I learn of Christ to be meek and lowly

in heart, surely I shall say, " Whence is this to that my Lord should come to me? "

Passion costs me too much to bestow it on e trifle.

Be it ever remembered as the ground of all conversion, a truth of the utmost importance in gion, necessary to cause us to aim our endeav aright, and fix us in faith, humility, and dep ence on God, that the essence of happiness is actions but affections. Actions will follow a tions, but without them are wholly insignifican our cure. Consider well, Matt. v. iii. 10; Ron 28, 29: 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 3. I have a very dist feeling and apprehension how the mental vice pride, envy, and wrath, war against the soul; that so long as they are predominant, it must ne sarily be in a sickly, self-tormented state; but I have not the same consciousness with regar some kinds of sensual indulgence. God knows they would hurt me, though I may not. Here re is at a stand, and faith must do its office. Perl 1 Cor. vi, 13, 20, would help me to a right un standing of this matter, if I could come at the m ing of it.

Every man should be a sun in his little sph merely a creature of divine goodness, manifes God's glory, and shining without merit.

Christian holiness, that which God requires o and offers to us, is health to the soul, and woul us good; the virtue we generally acquiesce in, prefer to it, is a poor thing, and leaves us just w it finds us, in point of happiness.

I can never be in union with God, till I s before him without guile, according to the trut my state; if it is bad, in confession and humiliat if good, in thankfulness, desire of improvement, humiliation still for the imperfection of it.

God deliver me from sin, and give me the de of perfect purity, and let happiness come whe

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ous presumption. The truly humble man is
ible in secret; it is a pain to him to have his
ility seen and observed; and whenever he has
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strength of him, rather than to have it in and
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blessed with his happiness. Methinks we may
something of the fall of Lucifer and the sin of
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is not fit to be trusted with self-ability; pride is
parable from it, and puffs it up sufficiently, even
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We should conceive of time and eternity as dif-
nt periods of the same state, or different degrees
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ons, but always improving; and not as separated
a great gulph, and quite different from each other
heir interests, pleasures, and employments. This

would be running time into eternity, and bring eternity down to time. We should then think and act like eternal beings, and live here as we are to do in heaven. Let the whole world therefore be divided into two great sects, viz. Timists and Eternalists.

To-day's duty is no discharge for to-morrow. Every day has its own peremptory demand on us, not only for repetition but advancement. It is a saying of St. Basil, that the soul would starve, as well as the body, without a continual renewal of its proper food; and St. Paul's motto, in the midst of such a course of labour and activity as would quite have sunk the spirits of another man, was FORWARD.

I can never bear to be found fault with, or thought meanly of by others, unless I am beforehand with them in thinking meanly of myself.

I find I owe meekness, tranquillity, patience, &c. to my body as well as to my soul.

We expect submission and amendment from the wrong person: we should expect them from ourselves.

Have a work to do daily, with a will to it, and a prayer on it; and let that work be God's.

Submission to the will of God once for all; and then I shall have my own every day and hour of my life.

There can be no true peace with God without faithfulness in duty, and a resolute abhorrence of all sin.

Whatever good qualities you have, desire not to have them seen, unless it be for the benefit of others, and to bring glory to the Author of them. Be as good, and do as much good as you can, and give the pride of it to the devil.

Time can only be made happy, as eternity will be, by our living for and with God; not grudgingly, or barely from a sense of duty in obedience to a command, but freely and with delight, as the very thing we choose and are carried to with the bent of our nature.

I am resolved to receive my virtue from God as a gift, instead of presenting him with a spurious kind of my own.

Till we do our duty to God, we can never do it to man. And what we do to others will be more from spurious motives, than a sense of duty or religion in the heart.

"The meek shall inherit the earth." Whatever other sense the words may have, they are certainly true in this, that the meek have much more enjoyment of themselves, and pass more quietly through the world, whatever is their lot in it, than other men. What would the greatest affluence signify to a man's happiness, if he had it with this condition, to receive one or more wounds with a sword every day of his life? Pride and passion are that sword.

I am under a strict bond to Jesus, to receive the rule of right from him in all cases, and act agreeably to it.

The heart can only be happy according to its bent, and in the possession and enjoyment of what it loves. All therefore depends on the choice it makes of its object; and there is but one we can think of, which, for power, fulness, and continuance, is sufficient for its happiness.

I would not exchange the little faint efforts I can make towards praising God for all worldly comforts.

A tender conscience is an inestimable blessing; that is, a conscience not only quick to discern what is evil, but instantly to shun it, as the eye-lid closes itself against a mote.

A lively sense of God's mercy in Christ, and love in the heart—is not this the Spirit's baptism of fire? And what have I to do in the world but to get and keep it?

What God commands, I will do; what he forbids, I will not do. This may be hard work, and a cross to *self; but if I am not* thus disposed and resolved

once for all, where is my obedience, and what less than this can be called sincerity?

God has only one way of bringing all to himself, viz. by martyrdom, or the crucifixion of our wills.

So long as the animal, sensual nature is predominant, we can only amuse ourselves with one opinion after another, but never come to the truth.

I did not know how much I was given up to earthly comforts, till they were taken from me, and I was reduced to the necessity of living on God.

Now for a single eye and a pure heart! Now there seems to be an opening to the happy time of forsaking all. It is only a glimpse; but if I keep my attention fixed on it, it will bring me full into the light.

There is a kind of almightiness in the will to reject sin, whenever it is pleased to do its office; as it infallibly always would, if it were so free as is commonly imagined. It seems to me that the great change which the scripture calls regeneration, or renewal to the image of God, is setting the will at liberty to execute the commands of him who gave it us, and who does nothing without it.

The Spirit plies his office with great assiduity and divine art; pressing to be heard, waiting for the favourable season, and always ready to improve it.

A fall is God's advantage as well as the devil's; and as we incline to one or the other, we may rise higher from it or fall still lower.

The more I increase in notions only, the more guilt of knowledge and pride of heart.

It will be well with me when perfection is the great purpose of my life, the ruling passion and wish of my heart, and I direct my efforts towards it, and grieve as much for coming short of it, as natural or worldly men do when they are perpetually crossed and hindered in the darling object of their pursuit.

There is no happiness but in perfection, conse-

quently not in this world; for the nearer we come to it, the more we grieve for coming short of it.

God made us for eternity, and his aim in all he does, is to bring us happily to it. Hence the necessity of pain, sickness, crosses, to break the strong chain which binds us to the world, and force us to take part with God in his grand design.

Every man might be more useful and happy than he is, if he would be contented to be employed about one thing.

Better give my heart to God late than never; better by force, or the loss of earthly comforts, than not at all.

If I were to give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, Christ would say to me, 'This is not the sacrifice I want; give up that darling lust; give up every sin; give up thy will; sacrifice thyself to be as a whole burnt-offering in the fire of love, and for the joy of my salvation.'

The "poor in spirit," are those who desire no earthly distinction, covet no earthly riches, are thankful for what they have, and think it more than they deserve.

Desired to pay my subscription to the county hospital—God's demand is on the heart, for love, for cheerfulness in giving, for activity in doing good, for a great deal more than I do, for singleness and purity in all things, and all for Christ's sake.

When frames are high, self is high, pride is high, and faith often at the lowest. When frames are low, faith is not therefore high, but self may be as strong as ever, and only restless and troubled for the want of its sole support.

The will of God is my life, and dearer to me than life. If I do not stand to this, I am undone.

Conversion is, when the longing of the soul is no longer to sensual gratifications or worldly abundance, but simply and purely to heavenly things; so that *when the question is* asked, wherein do I seek for

rest, satisfaction, and enjoyment? the heart can answer at once—in communion with God, through Christ, by the Spirit.

We are perfect, not by arriving at a certain point of perfection, but by always going on; as a traveller is equally perfect in every step of his journey, who knows his way, and proceeds in it without stopping.

One sensible, experimental proof of Christ's power and presence in time of conflict, of danger, or temptation, will hardly ever be forgotten, and binds the soul to him in trust and affiance more than a thousand arguments.

God cannot be enjoyed but as he is loved, nor loved but as he is known, nor known but by Christ, nor by Christ but as revealed to the heart by the Spirit.

Actions, affections, passions, flowing from religion as a nature, are a source of happiness to ourselves and others; but the contrary, when religion is submitted to as a task, and there are no love and purity in the heart.

We have time enough to prepare for eternity, and should be thankful that we have none to spare.

We cannot enjoy both God and sin. It is the curse of nature, and horrible corruption, to choose the latter.

I see plainly why I am no better; it is because I do not live more on Christ. The more I possess and enjoy his love, the more I shall study to please and be like him.

The journey through life is as Peter's walking on the water; and if Christ does not reach out his hand, we are every moment in danger of sinking.

He is a happy man who is never angry; next to him is he whose anger immediately recoils on himself for being angry.

He who is heartily troubled for his anger in godly repentance and earnestly striving against it, is, per-

haps, a more virtuous man than he who, from natural meekness of temper, is seldom or never angry.

Nature says, If I may not sin, let me die; grace says, Let me die rather than sin.

The Christian draws nigh to God as a reconciled Father in the faith of Christ; presses on to a complete victory over sin, and the glory of the inward man in a pure and perfect heart. God, to-day; and what to-morrow? God.

Thankful for Christ, thankful for every thing, and always in a serene, quiet state of mind.

It is a great paradox, but a glorious truth of Christianity, that a good conscience may consist with a consciousness of evil.

The gospel precepts, or morality, are not regulated in the manner of Socrates, Plato, &c. but delivered to us on the authority of God; and receiving them as so delivered, is not only a better security against mistake, than reason can be in its most improved state, but it is our rectitude in the sight of God, and perhaps the highest excellence of which the soul of man is capable, as being the test of its obedience and submission to the sovereign and only perfect will.

"No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it under a bushel." "From him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath." Let me not think that God hath given me abilities which he hath not, or be unthankful for what he does give, or suffer them to lie dead on my hands, or take the glory of them to myself, or envy others for having more, or despise any for having less.

I should be as thankful for every morsel I eat, as if I were perishing with hunger, and it were brought to me by a miracle; thus, indeed, it is with a great many.

I shall be as happy as it is possible to be on this side of the grave, when I have a clear perception that *divine things* are preferred in my esteem to all

others, and have taken such possession of my soul, that I settle on them with full acquiescence; not looking for rest and satisfaction from sensual gratifications, worldly prospects, or comforts of any kind, but solely in communion with God, and enjoying myself day by day in doing his work, in the relish I have for spiritual exercises, and a diligent preparation for eternity. O blessed Spirit, clear up this idea to my mind, and by thy effectual operation make it life and power in my heart!

The earth would be still a paradise, if we had the art of enjoying it, and did not turn it into a curse to ourselves by our sins and passions.

It is hardly worth while to be happy for the short time of life. If you must needs be at pains about it, let your first efforts be to find out the men who can tell you what happiness is. He is the least unhappy who makes least account of happiness in this world, puts himself in God's way to it, patiently waits his time for it, and can see a smile on the face of death.

The best thing we can do in the want of love, is to endeavour, under a sense of duty, to do as nearly as possible what love would.

Christ's service, and the appertinents of God's worship, are the enjoyment of the day, the seasoning of life, the soul's feast and proper nourishment.

No compensation, commutation, or substitute of any kind, will be allowed instead of a renewed will and unreserved obedience from a pure heart. Be entire with God, O my soul! Come full into the joy of a pure heart, an obedient will, and an upright conscience. Never set a foot forward without making it a step to the New Jerusalem. I shall have brough all to a happy conclusion, when God has full possession of my heart.

A person who has taken gospel truths into his mind and heart, and can think, with well-grounded hope and pleasing expectation, on the joys of he-

lievers, will have but little relish for Homer, Virgil, Horace, Tully, &c.

If you would be humble, and know what you want Christ for, never think how much you have done, but how much you have left undone. On the other hand, make not what Christ has done for you a pretence for doing less than you might.

Happiness is not here. It cannot be found in the way of nature, sadly corrupt and disordered; and nature will have its share of the man in spite of all his efforts to dispossess it.

The heart is to the soul what the stomach is to the body; a good or bad constitution resulting to and from each respectively.

In all events and occurrences, trials and crosses, I would go to Christ for advice and power to act according to it.

On earth, prayer, improvement, waiting; in heaven, praise, perfection, happiness.

Live with God now, as you expect and wish to live with him for ever, in holy fear, pure love, and the perfection of an obedient will. It is an awful thing to die, more or less as we make it an awful thing to live.

Those who magnify the present comforts of religion, and embrace it chiefly as a means of happiness in this world, are only sensualists in disguise, and sure to be disappointed.

A good man loves goodness in the abstract, for its own sake, in others as well as himself, in God transcendently.

God will not suffer the world to smile on his servants, lest they should fall in love with it. The man who knows his business in the world, and has his eye fixed on his best interest, can welcome pain, crosses, passion, hatred.

When shall I be pleased with myself? Never, till I am pleased with God.

"*Followers of* them, who, through faith and

tience, inherit the promises." If we are Christians, we shall believe, desire, and long for the promises; and as surely as we desire them, we shall prepare for them in God's way.

Engaging in religion merely for the present comfort and satisfaction of it, or because it is the happiest kind of life, is doing it on a mistaken motive; and if our expectations are not answered to the full, we shall grow weary of it, and fly to something else. It should be for eternity; and then we shall be set free from worldly desires, supported with hope, refuse no hardships, wait patiently, and continue steadfast to the end.

Every spiritual person, at times, is lively, and feels a glow at his heart in the exercise of faith, prayer, meditation, and reading the scriptures; but though he has the same will and desire, yet, in spite of all his efforts, he is oftener dull, cold, and unaffected. I can account for this no way, but by the Spirit's agency and presence at one time more than another; because in other intellectual acts and appearances it is not so. Whatever science a man is in pursuit of, the mind is ready at his call, though not always with the same vigour, yet with very little variation or interruption.

It is something to make the thought of Christ's presence a check to every thought, word, and deed, but still it is only being an eye-servant. Would I do and forbear the same things for his sake, and out of pure love to his commands, if I knew he did not see me?

When time is devoted to God, we shall have enough for all other uses.

"Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"—abstracted from the world, its interests and pleasures; singly and purely devoted to God, and the pursuit of heavenly things; determined for all duty and against all sin. "That Christ may dwell in my heart by faith"—the joy and the Lord of my

heart; the sweetness and drawing of my heart; the cordial and the life of my heart; so lovely and so beloved, that I had rather die than displease him. "My heart is fixed"—to have no temptation or evil lusting, I cannot say; not to yield to it or fall by it, I must say.

I am sensible that the Spirit will bring me under a severe discipline, and carry on his work according to the rule of scripture, without allowance of one sin, or dispensing with any one command. Am I in his hands for such a work as this, and does he say Amen to it in my heart?

If desire of regeneration and persevering prayer for it, is not a proof of faith, it will be hard to find a man who can give a better.

Get a step towards heaven, endeavour to master some evil temper and break loose from some worldly tie, every day. Victory over one sin on right grounds, will pave the way to an easy conquest of all.

If I were to begin my life again, what would I do? Live to God or myself? Do I not see the amiableness, excellence, and necessity, of such a disposition? What then is my present determination?

What does it signify where I am, or what can I want, if I advert always to the presence of God; see him in every thing, find him in my heart, and have no design in the world but of living to his will, nor expectation of rest and enjoyment but in communion with him?

My rest is not here, either in respect of outward things, or the inward state of my mind.

If I do not enjoy the will of God, I shall have no enjoyment of any thing else. I may have comfort for the remainder of life, if I can but come to a resolution of giving up all other comforts and enjoyments for the will of God.

Conquest of temptation, deliverance from the power of evil habits, and a ready compliance with the will *of God, in answer* to prayer, are much better proofs

of his favourable presence than joyous feelings. latter may be mistaken; but the former are as marks of the divine operation and blessing, as th plentiful crop of corn has had the benefit of rain sunshine.

Sensible communications may be, and are, o withheld from the best of men. The better they the more they desire perfect conformity to the of God as their portion and happiness.

Happy man, when that hallelujah is the e: rience of my soul, "The Lord God omnipo reigneth!"

My cure is in the hands of God, and I must set him a time, but pray earnestly and wait patie for its coming.

God helps us in the way of our own wills, and are never helped internally till they are in union the commandments. It is a glorious state, and ha proof of our renovation, when we stand firm on G side against temptation.

How happy shall I be in the full desire—O] happy in the full experience—of the grace and po of Christ!

"As yet hardenest thou thyself against me, thou wilt not let sin go?" See the history of Phar

The soul cannot possibly be in a state of indif ence; it must have a prevailing, supreme regar some object or other as its support. The great teresting question is, God or sensuality? If th is not a clear, positive determination for the form the latter is proved on us at once.

We miscarry sadly in our religious progress, attempting the hardest things first. It is our duty praise God, and happy is the soul that can do it; it is a vain thing in the mouths of those who have yet learned to have patience with him.

A plant must be set in the earth, and have rain s sunshine. This is the very case of the soul's i plantation into Christ, and growth by him.

We could be well enough content to be rid of some particular spiritual disorders, and perhaps may be earnest in prayer for it; but this is wretched tampering with a mortal disease, and in this way we shall always be unhelped. Christ's method of healing is to strike at the constitution of sin, by going to the root of the distemper, and we never can persuade him to begin his work at the wrong end.

Communion with God can only be on God's terms, by a perfect surrender of myself, all I have and am; my understanding, heart, will, conscience, affections, state, and life; to know, do, suffer, and be whatever he pleases. God's victory is in and over the heart. Being good is a different thing from doing good, and much harder.

That any man's thoughts are raised heavenwards, and his affections set on things above, is as much from the Spirit's agency, and by as great a miracle, as if his body were to rise up into the air.

A little farther from sin, and a little nearer to God day by day.

The comfort of the Holy Ghost is, first, his establishing us in the faith of Jesus Christ; that through him we have forgiveness of sins, and in him are made the righteousness of God, and heirs of everlasting life; and, secondly, his working repentance, uniting us to the will of God, and renewing us to his image in love. The first is our chief comfort here; the latter is only a begun state, and will be our glory and never-ending happiness in heaven.

Grieve for nothing but sin, and for not grieving for it enough: rejoice only in Christ's victory over it, recovery to God by him, and pure devotion to him. Oh! that I may from henceforth think with horror, astonishment of soul, and the most perfect detestation, of indulging a wish, or keeping any thing in my heart, that would keep God out of it. I hope I shall make a choice; and I know what it must be, God and *his will, Christ* and his work, the Spirit and his hap-

tism of fire. 1 Sam. vi. 12. "And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemish, and went along the high way, lowing as they went; and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left;" just so I should do, go straight forward, against nature, by a divine impulse, into God's land.

Every temptation is an opportunity of getting nearer to God.

Cleave to the will of God, and turn with it constantly as the weathercock does with the wind.

What is the great single object, the sole end I live for, and keep constantly in view? Is it heaven in the way of duty and labour, whatever it cost? or a scheme of some kind or other for present gratification, terminating in this world? that is, in St. Paul's words, "making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," no matter how decently and reputably.

The soul is like the earth, sometimes green and springing, at other times dry and withering: both powerless in themselves, and neither of them fruitful without a proper cultivation on the part of man.

The Christian says, Wherever I see the will of God, my own is determined at once: I account all hardships light, for the joy I have in it: and opposition to it, hell.

I never look on a dead corpse, and yet my soul perhaps must one day behold my own. What an awful moment! how happy will be the sight if soul and body have lived together for eternity! how dreadful if they have not; and what a call is there in this thought to make sure of rejoicing then.

When my nature is renewed, I shall be in renewed nature; see the world, and every thing belonging to it, in a new light, and have one foot in paradise restored.

Confess your sins, and pray, as if it was to be the last time.

I shall never be any thing till I know I am nothing; leave it to God to make what he pleases, and seek no

praise or worldly advantages inordinately for myself. If I am in union with the will of God I shall see it, and advert to his presence in every thing, and bless him for every thing, wind and weather, crosses, sickness, death; and, what is the hardest of all, I shall do it in health and prosperity.

If I was told that I must be ten feet high to get to heaven, what should I do? Use means, and strive hard to stretch myself up to the measure, or pray! The holiness required of me is as much out of my power, and as much the work of another hand. Men may counterfeit it; but to be real it must be infused or created. In this point we grievously mistake, or overlook, both scripture and experience.

Life has its enjoyments, and is not the contemptible thing we make it, but heaven on earth, when it is conducted on right principles, directed to a right end, and devoted to the will of God. What would we have more, when the way to heaven is through heaven: if quiet passions, regular desires, contented minds, pure wills, well-grounded hopes, holy longings, happy foretastes, communion with God, and reconciliation to death, can make it so?

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,"—by adverting continually to his presence with reverence and godly fear; considering him as always looking on the heart; trusting on his almighty protection; believing in him as a holy, sin-hating God, and reconciled to sinners of mankind only in Jesus Christ; valuing his favour above all the world, and making it the settled, sole aim of our lives to approve ourselves to his pure eyes.

If I was in union with the will of God, I should see whatever befalls me as stamped with it, and be always in a state of enjoyment, as having the very thing I desire.

"He that forsaketh not all that he hath,"—all he desires, loves, and is by nature; all his worldly *possessions and enjoyments*, so as to be separated from

them in heart and affection, and clearly resolved to follow Christ, cost what it will; renouncing his reason, powers, and tendencies, as truly insufficient to make his peace with God, and conduct him to happiness, "cannot," says Christ, "be my disciple."

We do not so much as *purpose* to do the will of God, till we purpose to do it fully. Obedience is doing the will of God because it is his will; and not only so far as I see the fitness of it, or as it falls in with my own way of pleasing myself.

Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;"—if the word *soul* was put instead of body, it would suit the generality much better. God is the Lord of my will, not sin, not the world, not the flesh, not the devil. God is the great object of my affections; the joy of my life; the portion and strength of my heart; the centre and rest of my soul, to whom all my desires tend, and with whom only I am at home. Lord, give me power to say this, and deal with me as thou pleasest.

Begin the Christian race from the cross, and whenever you faint or grow weary, look back to it.

O for the Spirit's sense of sin! the Spirit's sight of Christ! the Spirit's work of obedience!

It is a great thing to say, 'My will is God's;' but greater to say, 'My heart is God's!' Lord, have mercy on me, and help me in both; for it is only by thee that I can obey and love.

Be sure that you are in God's hands to deal with you as he pleases: and then desire nothing, either in temporals or spirituals, but what he orders.

One great mistake of life is looking to the clouds for happiness, instead of looking above them. The moment I forget God, or cease adverting to his presence, I forget myself.

When I fear the displeasure of God, seek his favour, set him always before me, delight in his presence, love his will, and make the eternal enjoyment of him the hope and great wish of my soul, I shall

know as certainly that my nature is changed by power from above, as that I did not make myself.

I read that such an one renounced the errors of Popery at such a time and place—have I renounced the errors of a sinful life, and all sin, as sin?

Mens sana in corpore sano; that is, 'a sound mind in a healthy body,' was a good pagan prayer; but the Christian's wish is, a right mind, let it fare with the body how it will.

We are never so near sitting down in the lowest room, as when we know assuredly that we are not in it.

CHAPTER X.

CHARITY.

I MUST love and honour all men, notwithstanding their vileness and corruption; and though I have reason to think, from what I know of myself, that they are much worse than they seem to be.

To leave off sinning is charity of the best kind to my neighbours.

If you would come to any nearer happiness on earth, endeavour to live with all mankind in a state of as pure love as you will in heaven. Dr. Young says, 'To have no one to whom we heartily wish well, and for whom we are warmly concerned, is a deplorable state:' but to have a universal tender feeling of love for mankind, as Christ had; and to regard every man as a brother, with the kindness of real affection, as Christians are exhorted to do; is certainly much better than a state of natural partial love to some few particular persons. Is this possible? Will it be granted to prayer?

We cannot love others in a right manner, without first loving God.

If my substance increases, wo be to me if all, who have a claim on me, are not the richer for it.

Never rebuke any man without praying for him.

No faith, no quickening, no renovation, no likeness to Christ, without the love of souls.

If I hate any one, I love none truly.

Look on every person you meet or converse with as one for whom Christ died. This will not only keep you from all injury, but engage you to all acts and endeavours of love to the souls and bodies of all.

The way never to speak of any with contempt, is never to think of any with contempt.

The farther a man advances in Christianity, the more he sees of the ignorance, selfish baseness, and corruption of mankind; and yet the more he loves them. The wisdom from above can account for this seeming impossibility.

If I aim at the real spiritual improvement of those I converse with, I shall never say any thing to irritate or vex them, but keep a constant guard on myself; and if it shall please God to work mightily on this passionate haughty spirit of mine, I shall be gentle towards all men, notwithstanding the greatest provocations.

It is a great fault, even of good men, to expect that others should be convinced of and brought to own the truth all at once, and perhaps to be angry if they are not; neither considering how difficult it is for such a blind and proud creature as man to see the truth and own his mistakes, nor by what slow degrees they arrived at truth themselves. Little good comes by disputing. Pride is generally at the bottom of it, and not charity, or the love of truth; and it is seldom managed with decency and candour enough to produce any good effect. Let fall a word in season, and wait in patience till the rain drops on it from heaven.

Though St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xiii. describes charity only by its effects, as exerted towards men: yet the essence of charity, and the root and cause of these effects, is and must be the love of God. Man in his natural state may love some few particular persons, and those perhaps not disinterestedly; but he cannot

love man as such, or the human nature in gene
he himself is transformed into the divine.

If we are truly foremost in the Christian
there will be no triumphing, nor carrying ou
aloft on it; we shall be heartily sorry to see ot
far behind us.

I do not know that any pagan writer ever m
or recommends, what Christ calls the first an
commandment, viz. the love of God; and yet
the grand duty of man to his Maker, the bas
essence of virtue, and the grand means of hap
when this is wanting, all our performances, ho
cious soever, are not only uncomfortable and
ceptable, but sinful.

It is a matter of no small difficulty to be
with reason on our side. And yet, for peace
and the preservation of decorum, or what is
essential, of charity and tranquillity, it is
most part necessary to acquiesce, even in thi
some consequence; how much more in trifle
matters of ordinary conversation!

When any one is discomposed and peevi
nothing or mere trifles, I see immediately the o
ness of such a temper, and the weakness of m
proceeds from. Perhaps it will be my tu
morrow. Let it be a rule with me, on such occa
to do all I can to heal and soften, and never t
tate, and especially to guard against the inf
of the disorder, and hatred of the person.

Liking and esteeming others merely for their
ment with us in religion, opinion, and mann
living, is only a less offensive kind of self-ador

Speaking ill of others at all, unless it be to
vent mischief to religion or our neighbour, is
for the sake of tickling ourselves, and those tha
us, with a comparison; it proceeds from pride
has no other tendency but to increase it.

I can love nothing as I ought, till I love
thing in God.

In case of peevishness, ill-nature, and unreasonable passion in others, if it is possible, be unmoved, be gentle, and compassionate; give place to wrath; do not irritate; try to soften; and sympathize not at any rate.

Love will fill up, and sweeten all our time.

A true Christian cannot bear the thought of going to heaven alone.

The strictest observation of the law, from slavish fear, or rather spurious motives, never worked any man one jot nearer to heaven. Without a true hearty principle of love and obedience to God, we are as much out of his way of happiness, as utterly unqualified for it, and as destitute of real goodness, as if we lived in the known continual breach of all the commandments.

Must no one hope for the favour of God, till he has attained to the perfection of charity, as described by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii.? Or does he set charity before us in its full dimensions to humble us, to show us the greatness of our imperfection; to send us to Christ for remission, and the gift of the Spirit; to lay in us the foundation of that divine grace, which must be begun here, but can only be perfected hereafter? Martin Luther is positive for the latter.

If any man takes a tenth or a fifth part, from his stock, to give to the poor, the remainder will be a weightier seed for producing an increase, than if the whole had been untouched. But then this is a delicate affair. To give, chiefly with an expectation of the increase, is traffic, and not charity.

Self neither can, nor perhaps ought, to be totally excluded from religion; but where it is the great motive, can there be any religion?

If I had no other end in view in advising or speaking my sentiments, than merely the good of others, I should never do it with any degree of passion.

The desire and love of God is, in proportion to the

greatness and reality of it, the extinction of all false desires, and consequently of disobedience.

The love of God and man, which is the sum of goodness, and without which nothing else is good, is but a sneaking virtue in the eyes of the humanly virtuous and worldly prudent, if not totally disregarded in their account of virtue.

Religious persons cannot help giving offence, and are bound to it; but if they are truly such, they will never do it but for the sake of religion.

O how I long to be received into the universal system of love, and to embrace every occasion of doing good, as food to an appetite, and the refreshment of nature!

If an injury is done me, why should I do myself a much greater by resenting it? We do not quarrel with our stomachs for being sick, or with our bodies for giving us pain; we have still no desire but to gratify and put them in order again. Thus we should be affected towards all mankind; and study only their good, let them do what they will to us.

I bless and praise the Author of my being, for giving me a nature capable of love, for showing me the excellence of it, inflaming my desires after it, and promising to give it in Christ Jesus, my Lord.

Love all mankind so well as to love God only better. Anger, spite, ill-nature, are sure to vex one, viz. the subject. The surest way to keep others in temper, is to keep ourselves so. Love all, help all, bear with all, condescend to all; but depend on none.

No one can desire to make others Christians, who is not so himself; and a true Christian cannot but desire it.

Disinterested, impartial, universal love of mankind, is the temper of happiness in us, and essential to it; but love of any thing as our happiness besides God in Christ, is our curse and misery. Acts of beneficence contribute nothing to our happiness, but

swell us with conceit, blind and corrupt us, if they are not acts of love.

Let me direct all my studies chiefly to the great end of serving others in love, and not merely with a view to the pleasure of knowing; much less to self-applause, or the good opinion of the world.

When others are unreasonably cross to us, we little think, 1. That the devil works on and is setting himself against us by their tempers, and that now is the time for conflict and manful opposition; nor, 2. What pity is due to those who are thus influenced by him. Let others be what they will, I must love them at my peril. Why then should I lay the greatest obstacle in the way of it, by aggravating their faults, or being forward to suspect any ill of them?

How glorious and happy to say truly in case of injury, 'The author of it only hurts me by hurting himself!' Before you resent a thing, take time, a twelvemonth at least, to consider whether there be any real cause for resentment; and if you find there is, do not deliberate a moment whether you should forgive.

Serve all with hearty good-will, but know mankind better than to expect much love or gratitude from them. Say all the good you can of all; but if you would have ill spoken of any, turn that office over to the devil.

The best way of being thankful to God for what he gives me, is a liberal distribution of it. Love every man for Christ's sake, and fear none in his cause.

When I am forward to speak the evil I know, or perhaps only surmise, of others, what can it proceed from but a desire that they should be universally despised, or fear lest they should not? How diabolical! Leave an ill report to shift for itself; you need not say a word to set it forward.

I love those as my best friends who want my assistance. If I hoard any money, it is no more to

me than if it were another man's which I had in keeping: it is only mine by being well bestowed.

Selfishness, with a measure of prudence, will make a good father, husband, friend, and neighbour; will perform many acts of virtue, and answer all the ends of society. And what can religion do more? Nothing, but turn selfishness into love, and make that a reality, which before was counterfeit.

Dr. Young says, 'There are some whom we cannot love but for God's sake.' It is a happy experience, and full proof of a supernatural change, when we find there are none whom we do not so love.

I spare to spend; enjoy more what I spend than what I spare; and what I give, more than what I spend. What I give cheerfully and for Christ's sake, is charity to myself. The farthing I give is gold, the guinea I keep in my pocket is lead. When Christ comes with any one to ask me to lend, he must not be denied, though I know he does not always intend to repay in kind. O how happy should we be, if we could impart ourselves to all, in all kinds of help, with the same freedom and propensity that a mother gives the breast to her child!

1 John iv. 10. Our love is not the cause or foundation of peace of conscience, but peace of conscience, grounded on the knowledge of God's love, is the spring and origin of our love to God and man; and this love in us is the surest proof of vital faith.

Let other's contempt of me, and the evil which I observe in such a disposition, be a strong call on me not to despise them.

If I were to read St. Paul's description of charity for a thousand years together, I could not get one property of it into my heart. Before charity can flow out of it, as from a spring, God must first cast the salt of the Spirit into it.

Memorandum—To have no controversy, if possible, with any one but myself.

Let who will die of those who are near and dear to

me, I shall still have enough left to love and be tenderly concerned for, whilst there are men on earth.

Why should I cause uneasiness to others, by reasoning or reproaches, however just, unless it be their spiritual good; and when it can have no other effect, but to inflame their passions, provoke their ill-will, and disturb the frame of my own mind.

Thank God for intrusting me with money to give, and much more for a will to give it. Wo be to me if I keep back any part of it!

Can I, in this time of dearth, keep back a single sixpence from him who shed every drop of his blood for me! Surely I have sin enough already, and more than I well know how to think will be forgiven.

Fear seldom does the whole of what is to be done, and, besides, is unsteady. Nothing but love carries a man through with resolution; and you may as well build a house on a wave of the sea, as ground love on any thing but faith in the peace of God. Fear forbears more than it acts, and both under the lash: love has wants of his own, to fly to all good and from all evil. When we have said all we can, it is better to do something in fear, than nothing without it.

The difference between carnal and spiritual love is, that one is convergent, the other divergent; one is drawn to a point, like the rays in a burning-glass, the other is diffusive, like the rays of the sun; one is particular and exclusive, the other is general, equal, and impartial.

If there were but one person in the world whom I knew to be the creature and workmanship of God, and all the rest made by chance, how greatly should I think of that person's nature and original, and how ready should I be to help him in all his necessities, for the sake of the divine impression he bears, and great dignity of relation! Behold, O man, thou art *placed in a world of* such beings; all the offspring of

God, dear to him as his children, thy brethren by the same high birth, and every one of them demanding thy love, esteem, and utmost compassion.

The man who wants me, is the man I want.

Memorandum—To do my duty to every one I come in company with, and pay Christ some part of the debt I owe him. "Take care of him," for Christ's sake, and with a feeling of his bowels.

God intends we should be happy, and cannot approve of any thing in us but what has a tendency to make us so. Hence the necessity of a free obedience from a root of love; for all force is misery.

If I consider how God loved me, who can be too wicked for me to love? To a believer, every distressed object is Christ's peremptory demand, or bill at sight, written with his blood, for so much help or such a sum as the case requires.

Let others say and do what they will, I must love. The obloquy, or ill usage of others, is my opportunity for self-inspection; and I am convinced, by a late occurrence, how much more happy I might have been all my life in a spirit of love. Not one of its proper ties, set down in 1 Cor. xiii. must be wanting.

To love mankind, knowing what they are, can be nothing but the work of omnipotence, and of God in man. I shall never love all mankind as I ought till I hate myself.

CHAPTER XI.

RESIGNATION.

SUBMISSION to the will of God, with experience of his support in pain, sickness, affliction, is a more joyous and happy state than any degree of health or worldly prosperity.

He who had no sin, suffered for all sin; well may I, who have so much, and laid so heavy a load on him, be content to suffer a little for my own. Lying awake all night—there is no sleep in hell, Rev. xiv. 11.

I see God in every thing; in pain I feel him; and know he is come near to me on some gracious design. I never have so lively a sense of the being, presence, and goodness of God, as in pain, sickness, and suffering; it puts me on thinking, and I cannot avoid coming to this conclusion, that it is ordained by his immediate will, and that he does it in mercy.

Instead of repining at bodily disorders, think how many have much greater, and how to be thankful both for those you have and have not. Pain, affliction, &c. is only God's speaking louder.

The strangury is a messenger sent from heaven to warn me home, to reconcile me to the thought of death, and prepare me for a happy reception into another world.

In pain, sickness, trouble, methinks I hear God *say, Take this* medicine, exactly suited to the case,

prepared and weighed by my own hands, and consisting of the choicest drugs which heaven affords.

If I was left to myself, I should never think of crucifying sin, with the stone and strangury as God does. The strangury has not done its work yet by far.

Say, my heart, with respect to the stone, 'I am unworthy of this mercy:' Lord, let it be more or less painful, and the means of death sooner or later, as thou pleasest, only make it a means of thy grace to me.

If the cross should be laid on me, it will come assuredly to my relief; and I must be destitute of grace, and dead to all consideration, if I do not regard it as help, and an especial mercy vouchsafed in a time of great danger.

A cold north wind—Have patience with God.

If my heart and will were given up to God, stone, gravel, strangury, &c. would be well endured, and death come with a smile on his face.[1]

If I am afflicted, or sick, or weak, or in pain, let me not comfort myself chiefly with thinking that it will quickly be over, or that I shall soon be well, but rather with thinking and knowing that it is the appointment of divine wisdom; for reasons of infinite concernment to myself, and for the end which God has chiefly in view for his people in all his afflictions, viz. the glory of his name in their spiritual health and recovery; and a blessed support it will be to know and feel that I do not so much desire ease and deliverance from present trouble, as grace and strength to undergo more and greater, and even death itself, quietly, obediently, in the spirit of faith, and with full acceptance of the will of God.

[1] Mr. Darracott, a valuable minister of Wellington, in Somersetshire, died of the stone, full of joy in Christ Jesus. The torment of the stone was so greatly alleviated, that in his last moments he said to his friends who stood around him, 'Is this dying?—'tis so easy, 'tis so easy!'

This whole life is a state of labour and suffering, in order to our purification, and not of enjoyment, either temporal or spiritual.

I believe no man is obliged to sell all he has, &c. because Christ gave such a command to one person, any more than he is obliged to sacrifice his son because God commanded Abraham to do so; and yet, doubtless, these were written for our instruction, that we might be ready always to obey the severest calls of Providence: a matter of no small difficulty, and which we infinitely deceive ourselves and others in. It is a common thing for people to say, God's will be done, without one grain of sincerity or true resignation.

It is one point of happiness, and perhaps the highest we can attain to, to know and be fully convinced that at the best we are but poorly qualified for it; and therefore must not expect it in this life. The generality of mankind create to themselves a thousand needless anxieties, by a vain seach after a thing that never was, nor ever will be found on earth: let us then sit down contented with our lot; and in the mean time be as happy as we can in a diligent preparation for what is to come.

The world is so constituted, that obedience to the commands of God is impossible, without taking up the cross daily: but then, they who are unwilling to take up the cross, explain away all the trying commands of the gospel, and that of the cross in the first place.

If any thing, though ever so dear, is taken from me by the order of Providence, I have no longer any interest in it, or business with it. The cloud is taken up, (Num. ix. 17.) and my station is fixed for some other place. God is now in the absence and privation of it, and if ever I find him it must be there.

It is our duty to bless God for the measure of grace we have, and to rest satisfied with his appointment *in spirituals* as well as temporals. Every

degree of real grace is his gift, and the work of the Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as he will; and to be thankful for lower degrees of grace, notwithstanding the most ardent desires and longings after the highest, is perhaps the truest as well as the most difficult kind of humility and resignation. Rom. xiv.

Christ is a refiner's fire. Mal. iii. We could like well enough to come and warm ourselves at this fire; but the business depends on being thrown into it.

Be not disturbed for trifles. By the practice of this rule we should come in time to think most things too trifling to disturb us.

Till I make, through grace, a full and free surrender of myself, my heart and conscience, whole state and being, to God, in simplicity and sincerity, his will for my salvation and recovery cannot take place in me! I shall not be steady a moment in the practice of holiness.

The highest angels are at an infinite distance from the knowledge of God; and, therefore, there must of necessity be always something in his nature and acts mysterious even to them: why then should not we be content with our darkness, and submit to live by faith here, when we must do it to all eternity?

How can I be happy but in God? And how can I be in God with a will contrary to, or but indifferent to his? No quiet in the Spirit till we settle on this basis of rest and satisfaction; acquiescence in the will of God; contentedness under the accidents of life; patience with the humours of all about us, and cheerful submission to the demands of the present hour.

God, who knows my state, and the danger I am in, sends pain to warn me of it, to make me dread sin more than pain, and to think how I shall ever be able to endure, remediless, everlasting pain.

Suffering is an excellent preacher, sent imme-

ately from heaven, to speak aloud in the name
God to the heart, mind, and conscience, and has
ved many a soul, when, humanly speaking, no-
ing else could. If it was not for pain, I should
end less time with God.

We may have some faint wish, and perhaps real
esire to be freed from sin; but not in God's way
a broken and contrite heart, or some grievous
ffering.

In a fit of the cholic.—Death frees from all sin:
ses of all troubles; clears up all mistakes; and is
full answer to all my prayers.

If I had not been kept awake with the tooth-ache,
should have lost a lively acting of faith, and one
the sweetest experiences I ever had in my life.

The will of God may put me to pain; but it is the
ill of God.

Joseph seems to have been at the height of perfec-
on when he resisted the solicitations of Potiphar's
ife; but if he had not wanted some further refine-
ent, God would never have sent him to prison.

If Mr. North's writings should be lost, and the
ol. I have depending on them, it will be my own
ult if I do not make it a step towards heaven, and
ceive more advantage and comfort from the loss
an I could from the money.—The writings may not
lost; and if they are, the money may be safe:
at if it is not, am I safe as to my inward disposi-
on, in a pure resignation to the will of God, to give
d take as he pleases; and am I sensible that a
uch greater cross is wanted?

The disorder of my body is the very help I want
om God; and if it does its work before it lays me
the dust, it will raise me up to heaven.

In affliction see the necessity of it, and be hum-
led; see the use of it, and improve it; see the love
ere is in it, and be thankful. I know of no
reater blessing than health, except pain and
ckness.

If we reflect on the exceeding sinfulness, desert, and horrible curse of sin, as represented in the dreadful consequences of the first man's sin, and the necessity of Christ's death, how comparatively light is all we suffer for our multiplied transgressions, especially considering that suffering is a corrective, as well as a punishment; and that, in the worst of troubles, we have this hope to support us, that there is redemption from all sin by the blood of Christ. I know this is but a thought, and, without God, will work no effect.

In the paroxysm of pain, or prospect of death, I can no more reason myself into a state of perfect submission and tranquillity, than I can think the stone out of my body. God's patience is that which he requires and gives, extends to every thing, and holds out till death.

Why should any man complain, or think his lot hard, when he has a God to live with, and order all his affairs in this world, and to do so when he dies?

I find it hard to bear and be contented with the disposal of Providence in temporal things; but much harder to bear my want of contentment, with perfect resignation to the will of God, and be as poor in spirit as I am poor in reality.

Query.—Whether it is not a high degree of holiness in a man who sees and laments his sin, and feels it as the heaviest of all burdens, to bear it patiently, and with submission to the divine will, as he would any other affliction, till God is pleased to remove it?

There is no coming to God but through pain; no matter how, if we do but come to him.

I am a cow poorer, a thought richer. If I do not give more, God will take more away.

God be thankful that I do pray, though but poorly. I will complain to none but God, and never of God. However I am crossed, or whatever I suffer, God

does me no wrong, intends me no hurt, designs my good. I may well be patient. I must do more; there is obligation in the case; I must be thankful.

Blessed be God for all his favours, and particularly for the special mercy of the stone.

We are always thinking we should be better with or without such a thing; but if we do not steal a little content in present circumstances, there is no hope of any other.

It is our duty to bear the disorders of the mind, as well as those of the body; feeling both, applying proper remedies, and submitting quietly to the will of God.

Whatever God is pleased to do with me, in me, for me, blessed be his will! If God gives me patience, and quiet submission to his will, in the want of what I pray for, he gives me enough, and more than I ask. At all events let the will of God be mine, in spite of nature, reputation, ease, or worldly interest.

Real heart-felt submission to the will of God in pain, sickness, crosses, every thing, never was the work of a man's own spirit; and when it comes from above, in answer to prayer, is full amends for all we can suffer.

I have just so much godliness as God gives me, and no more; and it is a necessary, but hard part of religion, to be contented and thankful, whether it be much or little. If this thought does not keep me humble and dependent, drive me to prayer, and make Christ all in all to me, I know not what will.

God does not regard what he makes us suffer, if he can but keep us out of hell. When I am in pain, I have a strong conviction of my obligation to Christ for delivering me from eternal pain.

When pain comes, God comes. Welcome pain. We should bear pain better if we did not increase it by impatience, or apprehension of the issue, and suffer *nothing but* the pain.

God's will is blessed, and, whether it be for or against me, I must wait patiently, and receive all as a gift; for I find I can do nothing.

Bear a light cross, as from God, and you will be prepared for a heavier, and have him bearing all with you.

Come what will, God does me no harm. If God has given me Christ, what have I to complain of? and how shall I welcome the disease, or decay, which is sent to secure him to me, and bring me to him!

Whether soap and lime-water will cure the stone, I know not; I am sure the stone will cure me.—The stone is an answer to my prayers.

It is hard to bear crosses, but harder to bear with my own impatience. And yet if God is not pleased to deliver me from it, on my endeavour and prayer, what can be more a duty than submission in the case, especially as I have Jesus Christ to thank him for.

When pain comes, I can hardly think of any thing but God; when I am at ease, the heart returns to its bent, the world resumes its place in it, and God leaves me.

God consults my interest in every thing, not me; and though I know he cannot be mistaken in what he does, I find it hard to give my consent to it.

When pain comes, it seems as if it was reached out to me by the hands of an angel, who is come post with me from heaven; glad of the office, of administering to my safety and improvement; rejoicing in the love of God towards me, and calling on me to join with him in blessing God for it.

God is always with me, though I am not with him; and because I do not advert to his presence, he sends pain to introduce, and even force me into his company.

In the strangury.—If ever I am to come to self-knowledge, to repentance, to Christ, to God, this is

the way pointed out to me by a clear light shining on it from heaven.

What would thousands and ten thousands give to be no more in pain than I am? What I suffer would be perfect ease to them.

I never have such a lively and full conviction of my weakness and absolute dependance on God, as in pain or sickness. Acquiescence in his blessed will, choice of what he chooses for me, and thankfulness for the mercy, I know to be my duty, and would gladly work this disposition in myself, but find, by repeated experience, that I have no more power over my mind than I have over my body.

By pain God drives me to prayer, teaches me what prayer is, inclines me to pray.

It is a sore trial to the soul to be deprived of all earthly comforts, and reduced to the necessity of living on God.

No man, let him be ever so great a saint, resigns himself to God's method of cure in suffering, with the same choice, confidence, and fulness of consent, that he would put himself into the hands of a surgeon to be cut for the stone.

If we do not propose to ourselves the same end in suffering which God does, self-knowledge and the purification of the heart, it must necessarily be without effect.

Because I trifle with my soul, and do not enter resolutely into a process of mortification, God in mercy takes the matter into his own hands, and sends pain to do that for me, which I am not willing to do for myself.

God sometimes will not let me sleep, but keeps me awake to catechise me; and is always ready with some new instruction or conviction.

Not too much pain; with God's help I can think so from my heart, take it patiently, and bless him for the mercy of it.

When I suffer most, I will comfort myself with

thinking that I might, and that many do, suffer more; and that all I can suffer is not only much less than I deserve, but ordained in mercy as the means of my eternal happiness.

Trouble is the engine in God's hands to lift us up to heaven.

What can I not bear with the help of God? What can I do or suffer without it?

The very point and top of resignation, is to submit quietly to the leading of God in the want of sensible support and comfort.

The pain of pain is impatience under it, and apprehension of its continuance or consequences. It might be greatly alleviated, if we adverted only to the present time, and did not add to it the burden of to-morrow.

Pain comes for punishment and purification; the one I am sure I deserve, and have great cause to lament the slowness and imperfection of the other.

If chastisement is a token of God's love, why should I faint under it, or so much as desire release from it, till it has done its work? I *must* suffer and die; with the help of God I *will* suffer and die.

CHAPTER XII.

PRAYER.

I HAVE great hope from the promises made to prayer, that I shall begin to live before I die.

What is the meaning of prayer, but that God would do what we cannot? and how vainly do we ask the help which we do not think we want!

The loss of prayer is the greatest of all losses; and yet how many prayers are rendered fruitless, if not turned into sin, through inattention, levity of spirit, unbelief, insensibility of want, or greater desire of something else in the heart.

No man need be miserable or unhelped, so long as there is a way open to the throne of grace.

If we pray at all, we must be poor, helpless, and resigned; neither thinking we have already what we ask, or that we can give it to ourselves; or setting a time, or prescribing a measure to God.

Nothing is more easy than to say the words of a prayer; but to pray hungering and thirsting, is the hardest of all works.

What more need be said of prayer, than that it brings God into the heart, and keeps sin out?

"Ask, and it shall be given you." I ask, therefore it is given me. The consequence is infallible; only let God choose the time and manner of giving.

Praying with the heart, for the heart, is praying by *the Spirit, whether* with or without a form.

No true prayer is lost, though we may have forgot it.

Blessed be God, I do not only begin to pray when I kneel down, but leave not off praying when I rise up.

All prayer is hypocrisy and sad deceit, if we do not ask what God would have us to ask, and really desire what we ask.

We can have no grace or spiritual supply without asking; and whatever we think of ourselves, or say to God, we cannot act without felt want, and real desire. Of those that do pray, how few pray from their own sense, or any particular knowledge of their own circumstances!

Acquiescence in the bare act of prayer, is a most dangerous delusion, and keeps the soul from its proper relief.

O God, give me what thou knowest to be good, and thou alone knowest what is good; give me more than I can ask or think; if the reverse of what I ask, is what I should ask, give me that, let me not be undone by my prayers.

Many pray not to be kept from sin, but to keep it; and with a secret hope that prayer will excuse it, and be accepted instead of reformation.

God does not want our praises; but the disposition to praise him is essential to our own happiness, and therefore required.

I put my prayers into Christ's hands; and what may I not expect from them, when I have such an advocate?

Prayer is living with God; and, if founded on right principles of religion, puts us on searching the heart, leads us to the knowledge of our wants and weakness, and fixes us in dependence on God. Nothing is more easy, as a bare duty or lip-service, and nothing more difficult than the performance of it in truth and sincerity.

Prayer is knowing work, believing work, thanking

work, searching work, humbling work, and nothing worth if heart and hand do not join in it.

There is abundant comfort in the thought that God has given me a desire and will to pray, for the blessings of Jesus; whether with greater or less fervour at the time of praying, it matters little as to the event: I may repose myself quietly on his word, in full assurance that there will be a performance of all his promises, in life, death, and eternity.

The great mistake of prayer is, not praying as poor and destitute creatures, but thinking that we are and have already in some degree what we pray for. See a notable instance of this in Lord Bacon's prayer, Tattler, No. 267. The liturgy is formed on a different plan, and puts us on a better method.

Be sure not to ask a little of God.

It is a great mistake that prayer is lost, or nothing but formality, because we do not find comfort in it, or any immediate effect from it, or do not pray with so much fervour as we could wish.

We are on the wrong side of prayer, till we have a lively sense of our condition in sin, and are convinced by self-knowledge of the necessity of redemption from the guilt and power of it.

It is a sad mistake in religion to acquiesce in the form of prayer, without obtaining, or desiring to obtain, what is asked.

It is an easy work to offer up many prayers to God; but who almost offers up himself to him?

We are apt to suppose that nothing is a return to prayer, but the very thing we ask; but if there is a better way of granting our request than we think of, it is well for us that God will not chose the worst.

We eat for bodily strength, and for strength to labour. So the spiritual life must be renewed and maintained by continual supplies of grace, to the end we may perform the services we owe to God. The consequence is, we must pray at least as often *as we eat.*

All power of spiritual renovation is from God; and it is a fatal mistake to look for it in ourselves, or in books, the scriptures not excepted. One prayer is worth a thousand fine thoughts.

Let your prayer be short, and think a long time before you begin, what you are going to say, and what you mean by it: that is, to speak plainly, whether you would be taken at your word, and put to the pain of having your prayers answered. It would be death to the generality, even of those who appear on the side of religion, to receive or be what they pray for.

When I pray, it is for a moral impossibility, and for as great a miracle, as if I was to say, 'Sun, stand still.' I shall never love God and hate sin as I ought, till I pray better.

Want felt, and help desired, with faith to obtain it, is prayer; and without these qualifications, whatever is called so, is nothing but self-deceit and lying to God.

We shall never be Christians, till we think as we pray, and always carry the same humbling sentiments about us, as if we were on our knees before God.

I can expect no good effect from my prayers, till I know what I am, and do not pray above my state, or think more highly of it, and of myself, than I ought to think, but sit down in the lowest room, as I well may, without any fear of mistaking my place.

It seems to me, that the first thing we should pray for is a sense of our wants, with a will and desire to pray according to them.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

AT the time of receiving—Lord, I here appeal to thy sacrifice against my sin, to thy grace against my corruption, to thy love against my fears, to thee against myself. I believe thy word; I remember thy command; I adore thy goodness; I wait for thy salvation. Give effect to thine own ordinance, and make it the seal of mercy, and the conveyance of life to me. O Jesus! come to my heart.

I go to the sacrament for mercy, and strength to keep mercy; to profess my faith in Christ, that I have pardon and peace with God, life and righteousness only by his death and merits; and to own my obligation to live unto him that died for me, in faith, love, and self-dedication. I go to the sacrament for Christ's love and likeness, for the benefit and for the munition of the cross; to have the load of sin taken from my heart, and any other which Christ thinks fit, laid on my back.

Was pardon, salvation, and life, received in the sacrament? Did I bid an eternal farewell to sin; and have I the poison of it expelled by the virtue of Christ's body and blood?

I go to the sacrament to leave sin behind me, and receive Christ instead of it; and if I do the one, laying my sins on Christ, with a will to forsake them, *I am sure of the other.* Lord, grant me thy peace,

and all that comes with it, love, patience, resignation, thankfulness, deliverance from the fear of death, and a hearty longing for eternity.

I go to the sacrament for the pardon of sin, for the kindling of love, for the turning of my heart, for the renewal of my will.

I do not go to the Lord's table to give but to receive; not to tell Christ how good I am, but to think how good he is. I have a great many sins and wants to tell him of more than would take up the whole day; and when I have told him all that I know of myself, it is not the half, but a very little of what he knows of me. I bring myself, that is sin, to him, believing that he will be all to me, and do all for me that is in his heart; and I know it is a very compassionate one. I go as a sinner to the Saviour. To whom else should I go, with my blind eyes, foul leprosy, hard heart, and rebellious will? You tell me I must have I know not how many graces and qualifications to go to the sacrament with; but I cannot stay for them; my wants are urgent; I am a dying man. My Lord, with his known kindness, says, 'Come; do this; remember me.' His invitation is qualification enough; and I long to feed on him, to thank God for him, to take him into my heart. I will go to behold him crucified, and his blood poured out for me, in spite of all my sins and fears; and, though all the saints on earth stood up with one mouth to forbid me, I go to put myself under Christ's wings, and fly to him for refuge from the monster sin, ready to devour me.

I go to the sacrament to know God and myself; to wonder at the reconciliation of strict punishment with free pardon; to see the greatness of my sin, and the greatness of my hope, in the greatness of the sacrifice therein represented; to sin no more, because I believe there is no condemnation for my sin; to be raised as high as heaven, and humbled in the dust; to be astonished at the mystery of Christ em-

cified, and to profess that I know less of God than ever.

Let me be daily thinking of the sacrament, daily in a state of preparation for it, daily living on it, resolving to secure my portion in the love therein exhibited, by receiving it in faith and humility, as love and undeserved mercy, making it my pattern, and dreading the sin which could be expiated with no less a sacrifice.

"Do this in remembrance of me."—Remember who I am, and what thou art; remember me as thy Saviour; remember me as thy Master; remember my love; remember thy obligations; remember me as hating thy sin; remember me as bearing thy sin; remember me, and fear not; remember me, and sin not; remember me, to live for me, by me, with me.

The day before the sacrament.—Knowing and assuredly believing the promises of God made over to me for the forgiveness of my sins, through faith in the blood of Christ; I do, from a detestation of my sinfulness, and a hearty sense of my want of pardoning grace, accept his covenant of rest and peace; trusting in him for the accomplishment of my whole salvation, in the way of gospel-holiness, by his Spirit; and resolving, without delay, to put myself into his hands for that purpose. And may the God of mercies keep me stedfast in this faith and engagement, and carry me on from strength to strength, that I may be one with him, and with my Saviour, and live for him, and love him with all my heart, and with all my soul.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

I MUST, I must incur the hatred of my parish and hearers, in love to them, and for Christ's sake; but let me be infamous, so I may but do good.

Ruling slothfulness in a minister of the gospel, is a certain mark of infidelity, or an unregenerate state.

Let no man think he is qualified to seek and to save that which is lost, as an agent under Christ, till he has first found himself.

A clergyman, if in truth he is a follower of Christ, must not expect to have any friends in his parish but his converts; the rest will despise, envy, and traduce him, more than they do other men.

How much better would it be if, instead of censuring and bitterly inveighing against the ignorance, perverseness, and corruption of my neighbours, I exerted myself in good earnest, according to the duty of my station, and the talents which God has given me, to instruct and reform them! Perhaps, many an one has long been waiting at the pool of Bethesda for some friendly hand to help them in, and I pass by them with a stupid unconcern, and leave them groaning under their misery.

There is but one right way of preaching, which is to speak the plain truths of the gospel plainly. But

then, this way is the hardest of all others, for it supposes conversion in the preacher.

It is the business of a minister of the gospel to preach faith and live morality.

I find it very difficult, if not impossible, through my selfishness, to sink myself into the common mass of mankind, so as to take my full share of their guilt, to sympathize, to pity, to have a fellow-feeling of their wants, joys, and sorrows, and be truly concerned for the temporal and spiritual welfare of all.

How glorious a distinction for any man to be employed, as an agent under Christ, in the recovery of souls; and what guilt not to attend on it out of love to him, with the same ardour and assiduity that other physicians do for their fees!

How can those preachers be supposed to bring others to Christ, who never came to him themselves?

We are greatly deceived in fancying that discernment, or approbation of moral excellence, is possession, or ability to possess ourselves of it. The Christian religion goes another way to work with us; and those preachers wretchedly mistake their office, and abuse their hearers, who spend all their discourses in recommending virtue to their notice and esteem; without leading them to the root of their disorder, and pointing out the cure.

What would a physician, who had a sovereign cure for all diseases, be accounted, if he kept it a secret, or was slothful in dispensing it, or mixed poison with it? How much more criminal is a minister of the gospel, who thinks himself entrusted with an infallible medicine for all the disorders of the soul, if he adulterates it, or is unfaithful and inactive in applying it?

I may conscientiously take the wages for the work, when I have a distinct consciousness that I would do the work without the wages.

To relinquish or intermit parochial labour, because *it is not attended* with success, would be terribly in-

excusable. Labour on; commit the matter to God; wait patiently; get a feeling of the bowels of Christ; and die praying, "Lord, pity the people!"

The declarations of scripture concerning the guilt of sin and the damnation of sinners, may be assented to; but are fully and efficaciously believed by few. Hence faintness of endeavour to snatch others out of the fire; cold prayer; speaking, preaching, and writing, without real pity and heart-felt concern.

"But we will give ourselves unto prayer, and the ministry of the word." Remember this, O my soul, it is for eternity.

A poor country parson fighting against the devil in his parish, has nobler ideas than Alexander had.

As a minister of the gospel, I must either be despised or hated. I choose the latter.

Am I a minister of Jesus, with his bowels for souls? called? willing to be spent? regardless of worldly preferment? owned of God? hated of men? happy in myself?

Intrusion into the ministry for worldly ends and with absolute unfitness for it, in great ignorance of Christ, great unconcern for the salvation of souls, consequent sloth and remissness, squandering a large income in sensual pleasure, and when I was something awakened, doing what I did in self-dependence and self-seeking,—how awful!

Dreamed that J. M. and S. E. were under soul-concern. I interpreted it as a call to go and speak with them. But what shall I say to J. for not speaking more to him and to all others, without a dream?

CHAPTER XV.

HEAVEN.

My heaven on earth is communion with God; and therefore nothing else would be my heaven in heaven.

We shall never know any degree of happiness in this life, till we are settled in a clear conviction of judgment, that it is chiefly hereafter, and that we are in the way to it. God forbid I should ever think myself at home till I am in heaven.

Heaven is not a place or state of idleness. Perhaps the highest angels have a task and work assigned them, which keeps them continually employed. What is considered as greatness and happiness on earth is, having nothing to do.

Happiness will be the necessary result of gospel holiness, when external impediments are removed; but heaven itself would lose its nature, if the inward disposition were wanting.

Our future existence will be the same kind of life, or state of being continued, which we are fixed in here. Death makes no alteration in our condition: it only clears up our mistakes about it.

Thankfulness and happiness imply each other: we must be thankful to be happy, and happy to be thankful. God's house is an hospital at one end, and a palace at the other. In the hospital end are *Christ's members* upon earth, conflicting with various

diseases, and confined to a strict regimen of his appointing. What sort of a patient must he be, who would be sorry to be told that the hour is come for his dismission from the hospital, and to see the doors thrown wide open for his admission into the king's presence?

Nothing can be our happiness in this life, but what is to be the foundation of it in the next. If I cannot serve God and my Saviour with delight, and make a kind of heaven of it here, they have no other heaven for me hereafter.

We shall never know the thousandth part of our mercies, deliverances, and protections, temporal and spiritual, till we come to another world.

In heaven, sin known and pardoned is the song of praise; sin known and unpardoned is hell.

If ever I thank Christ as I ought, it must be in heaven; it is in vain to think of doing it here.

Heaven is heaven rather as a state of exemption from sin than suffering. We must die for perfect conformity to the will of God; and it is worth dying for.

Delight in the will of God is the perfection of all intelligent beings, the essence of happiness, the joy of angels, heaven on earth, and the heaven of heaven.

Heaven is wherever God is, in my heart, if I desire it, and delight in his presence.

Ten thousand years in this world would not complete my happiness; I should never be wise and good, have an absolute command of my will, passions, and affections, without one irregular thought, vain wish or spot of sin. If we are really aiming at and longing for this perfection, how desirable is death, which alone can put us in possession of it! By death we do not go out of life, but into life.

The Christian's hope of heaven is the sweetness of prosperity, and the support of adversity, and cures us at once of all attachment to the world, or expectation of rest in it.

If Christ had not brought down heaven to us, we could never have raised ourselves up to it.

This world is the reign of darkness, pain, and sorrow; and we must not expect fully to find God here as a present portion. The Christian believes that he shall know him better, and enjoy him fully hereafter. O my soul hold fast and be very thankful for the sweet hope!

"Let us labour to enter into that rest."

We like the rest, better than the labour of attaining it; but cannot so much as have an idea of it, if we do not think it worth all the labour we can bestow on it.

It is a vain thing to think we can take any delight in being with Christ hereafter, if we care not how little we are in his company here.

The highest state of the greatest saint on earth is only a small taste or glimpse of heaven, in the first-fruits and earnest of the Spirit. The harvest is beyond the grave, and is not to be expected in this world.

When I can truly say, "Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven," I shall long to be in heaven that I may do it perfectly.

What is the reason that we do not keep our eyes steadily fixed on the light of scripture, and follow it as our guide to heaven, but because we do not really think of heaven, as the country we are bound to; have yet other designs in the world than to get thither, and whatever we pretend, do not desire to be there?

I long to know something and be something, that is, to die. I see the glory and beauty of perfect holiness, as Moses did the promised land from mount Pisgah; but, like him, must die without entering into possession of it.

"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;" that is, with angelical love and liking, and the full *bent of our desire to it.* A virtuous, pure, holy state,

is a strong tendency to all good, and only to good: and if we could suppose the mind to be in a state of suspense or indifference, and equally poised between good and evil, it would be a bad state. What then is man with a natural, and morally invincible, propensity to evil?

Unless I see something beyond the grave worth dying for, there is nothing on this side worth living for.

How welcome will death be to those who truly mourn for sin, feel the burden, taste the bitterness of it, and long for complete deliverance from it!

CHAPTER XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE commandment is holy, and just, and good, not only in its precept but its curse. The first is evident and denied by none; the latter is never believed but by a work of the Spirit.

Let us talk no more of the constitution of this or that country, and the excellence of one above another; it is in every man's power, through grace, to live under the best government in the world.

We may put on different clothes and different looks, speak different words and do different actions, on a Sunday; but nature will be the same that it is all the rest of the week. Sunday, in our rest from bodily labour and employment, in the thoughts it suggests, the prospect it opens, the hope it confirms, is a day taken from time, and made a portion of eternity.

Dreams indicate the temper of the soul more certainly than they do the temperament of the body. Dreams have no dissimulation; they unmask the heart, and tell me honestly what I am when waking.

A forced obedience will not make us happy in this world, but may not be lost as to another.

Hell is truth seen too late.

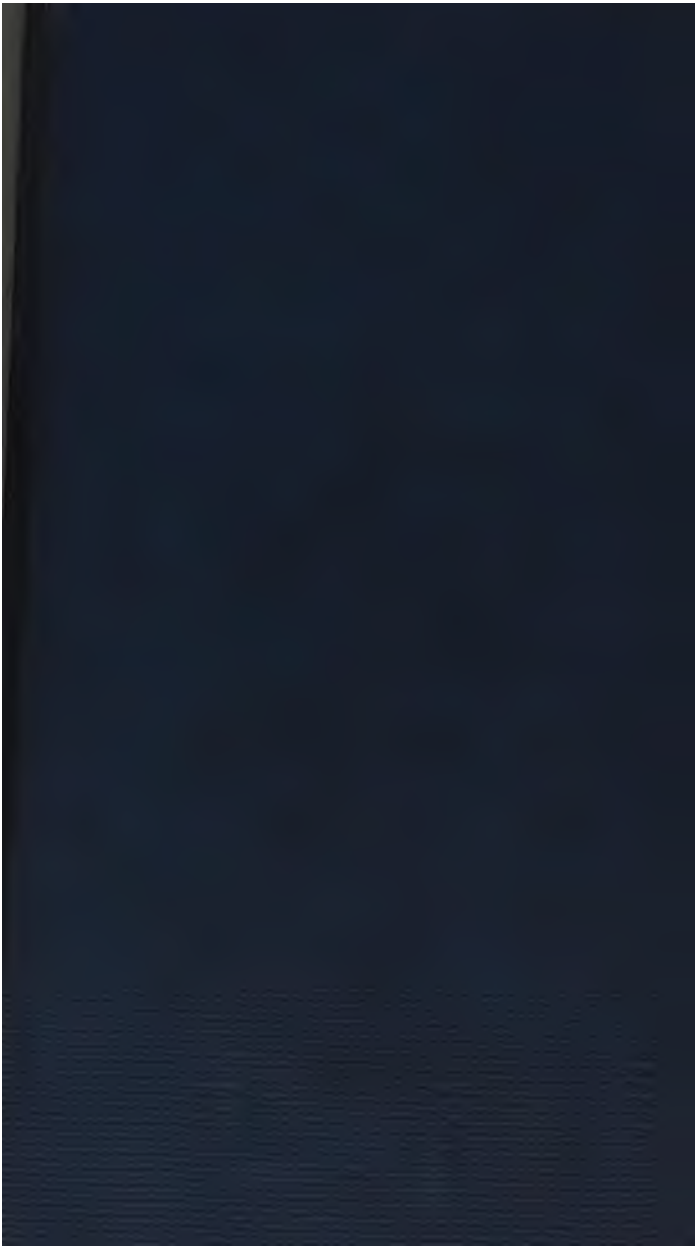
What is it to me whether the Americans are in a *state of rebellion* or not? Why do I not advert more

to the rebellion of my own heart and will against God?

A partial, half-religion is a state of terrible anxiety.

Why is a man for ever seeking after pretences to wander from home; fixing the laws of motion; measuring the planets; prying with glasses into the minutest parts of nature; and either gazing with stupid wonder on what he can never understand, or, what is worse, circumscribing Omnipotence, and saying, 'Thus it must be;' when all the while the poor soul within him, buried in flesh and blood, wants its proper relief, begs his attention, and being known, would infinitely reward his curiosity?

If we do not live down error, I am sure we shall never dispute it down.

The eager reading even of religious books may be dangerous, and a hindrance to those who are aiming at the true spirit of religion, if they have recourse to them instead of to God.

THE END.